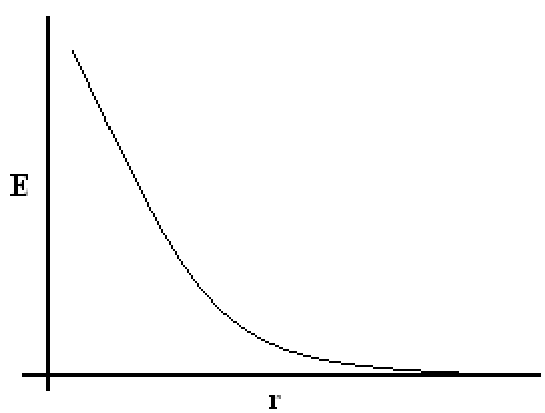
Class XII
Physics
Chapter 1: Electric Charges and Fields

Top Concepts

1. Like charges repel and unlike charges attract.
2. Conductors allow movement of electric charge through them, insulators do not.
3. Quantization of electric charge means that total charge (q) of a body is always an integral multiple of a basic quantum of charge (e) i.e.,q = ne, where n = 0, ±1, ±2, ±3, ….
4. Additivity of electric charges : Total charge of a system is the algebraic sum of all individual charges in the system.
5. Conservation of electric charges: Total charge of an isolated system remains uncharged with time.
6. Superposition Principle : Property that the forces with which two charges attract or repel each other are not affected by the presence of a third (or more) additional charge(s).
7. The electric field E at a point due to a charge configuration is the force on a small positive test charges q placed at the point divided by a magnitude $|q| / 4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^2$; it is radially outwards from q, if q is positive and radially inwards if q is negative.
8. *E* at a point varies inversely as the square of its distance from *Q*, the plot of *E* v/s *r* will look like the figure given below.



8. Coulomb's Law: The mutual electrostatic force between two point charges q_1 and q_2 is proportional to the product q_1q_2 and inversely proportional to the square of the distance r_{21} separating them.

$$\vec{F}_{21} \text{ (force on } q_2 \text{ due to } q_1\text{)} = \frac{k(q_1q_2)}{r_{21}^2}\hat{r}_{21}$$

where $\hat{r}_{21}$ is a unit vector in the direction from q_1 to q_2 and $k = \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0}$

is the constant of proportionality.

9. An electric field line is a curve drawn in such a way that the tangent at each point on the curve gives the direction of electric field at that point.

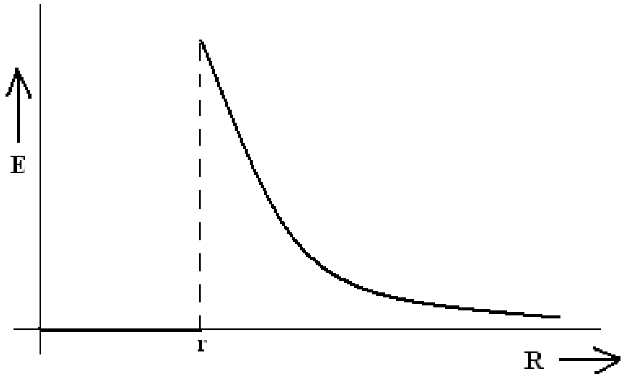
10. Important properties of field lines are:
(i) Field lines are continuous curves without any breaks.
(ii) Two field lines cannot cross each other.
(iii) Electrostatic field lines start at positive charges and end at negative charges – they cannot form closed loops.

11. The electric flux $\phi = \int d\phi = \int \vec{E}.d\vec{S}$ is a 'dot' product, hence it is scalar.
$\Delta\phi$ is positive for all values of $\theta < \frac{\pi}{2}$
$\Delta\phi$ is negative for all values of $\theta > \frac{\pi}{2}$.

12. Gauss's law: The flux of electric field through any closed surface S is $1/\varepsilon_0$ times the total charge enclosed by S.

$$\phi = \int \vec{E}.d\vec{S} = \frac{q}{\varepsilon_0}$$

13. Electric field outside the charged shell is as though the total charge is concentrated at the centre. The same result is true for a solid sphere of uniform volume charge density.
The electric field is zero at all points inside a charged shell.
Graphical plot of $\vec{E}$ vs *R* inside the spherical shell.



Top Formulae

1. Coulomb's Law:

$$\vec{F}_{21} \text{ (force on } q_2 \text{ due to } q_1\text{)} = \frac{k(q_1q_2)}{r_{21}^2}\hat{r}_{21}$$

where $\hat{r}_{21}$ is a unit vector in the direction from q_1 to q_2 and $k = \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0}$

is the constant of proportionality.

2. Electric field at a point due to charge q is given as

$$\vec{E} = \frac{\vec{F}}{q}.$$

3. Field due to an electric dipole in its equatorial plane at a distance r from the centre:

$$E = \frac{-p}{4\pi\varepsilon_0}\frac{1}{(a^2+r^2)^{\frac{3}{2}}}$$

$$\cong \frac{-p}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^3}, \qquad \text{for } r >> a$$

Field due to an electric dipole on the axis at a distance r from the centre:

$$E = \frac{2pr}{4\pi\varepsilon_0(r^2-a^2)^2}$$

$$\cong \frac{2p}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^3} \qquad \text{for } r >> a$$

Imp Note: The $1/r^3$ dependence of dipole electric fields should be noted in contrast to the $1/r^2$ dependence of electric field due to a point charge.

4. A dipole placed in uniform electric field E experiences:

Torque $\vec{\tau}$ given by

$\vec{\tau} = \vec{p} \times \vec{E}$,

Zero Force.

5. The flux $\Delta\phi$ if electric field E through a small area element ΔS is given by

$\Delta\vec{\phi} = \vec{E}.\Delta\vec{S}$

The vector area element ΔS is

$\Delta\vec{S} = \Delta S\ \hat{n}$

Where ΔS is the magnitude of the area element and $\hat{n}$ is normal to the area element, which can be considered planar for sufficiently small ΔS.

6. Electric field E, due to an infinitely long straight wire of uniform linear charge density λ,

$$E = \frac{\lambda}{2\pi\varepsilon_0 r}.\hat{n}$$

where r is the perpendicular distance of the point from the wire and is the radial unit vector in the plane normal to the wire passing through the point.

7. Electric field E, due to an infinite thin plane sheet of uniform surface charge density σ ,

$$E = \frac{\sigma}{2\varepsilon_0}.\hat{n}$$

where $\hat{n}$ is a unit vector normal to the plane, outward on either side.

8. Electric field E, due to thin spherical shell of uniform surface charge density σ

$$E = \frac{q}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 r^2}.\hat{r} \qquad (r \geq R)$$

$$E = 0 \qquad (r < R)$$

where r is the distance of the point from the centre of the shell and R the radius of the shell, q is the total charge of the shell & $q = 4\pi R^2\sigma$.