

Chapter 1

Introduction and Review of Statics

1-1 INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of a course in mechanics of materials is the development of relationships between the loads applied to a nonrigid body and the internal forces and deformations induced in the body. Ever since the time of Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), scientists and engineers have studied the problem of the load-carrying capacity of structural members and machine components, and have developed mathematical and experimental methods of analysis for determining the internal forces and the deformations induced by the applied loads. The experiences and observations of these scientists and engineers of the last three centuries are the heritage of the engineer of today. The fundamental knowledge gained over the last three centuries, together with the theories and analysis techniques developed, permit the modern engineer to design, with complete competence and assurance, structures and machines of unprecedented size and complexity.

The subject matter of this book forms the basis for the solution of three general types of problems:

1. Given a certain function to perform (transporting traffic over a river by means of a bridge, conveying scientific instruments to Mars in a space vehicle, converting water power into electric power), of what materials should the machine or structure be constructed, and what should be the sizes and proportions of the various elements? This is the designer's task, and obviously there is no single solution to any given problem.
2. Given the completed design, is it adequate? That is, does it perform the function economically and without excessive deformation? This is the checker's problem.
3. Given a completed structure or machine, what is its actual load-carrying capacity? The structure may have been designed for some purpose other than the one for which it is now to be used. Is it adequate for the proposed use? For example, a building may have been designed as an office building but is later found to be desirable for use as a warehouse. In such a case, what maximum loading may the floor safely support? This is the rating problem.

Because the complete scope of these problems is obviously too comprehensive for mastery in a single course, this book is restricted to a study of individual members and very simple structures or machines. The design courses that follow will consider the entire structure or machine, and will provide essential background for the complete analysis of the three problems.

1-2 CLASSIFICATION OF FORCES 3

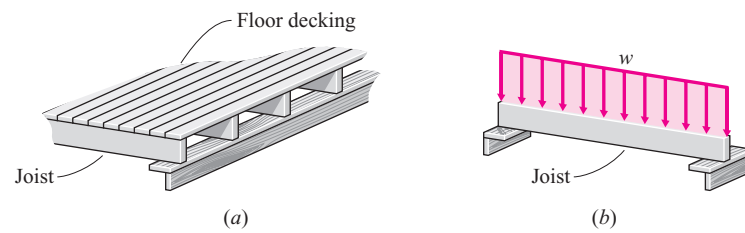


Figure 1-2

Other common types of forces are external, internal, applied, and reaction. To illustrate, consider the beam loaded and supported, as shown in Fig. 1-3a. A free-body diagram of the beam is shown in Fig. 1-3b. All forces acting on the free-body diagram are *external* forces; that is, they represent the interaction between the beam (the object shown in the free-body diagram) and the external world (everything else that has been discarded). Force F is a concentrated force, whereas w is a uniformly distributed load with dimensions of force/length. The forces F and w are called *applied* forces or loads. They are the forces that the beam is designed to carry. Forces A_x , A_y , and B are necessary to prevent movement of the beam. Such supporting forces are called *reactions*. Force distributions at supports are complicated, and reactions are usually modeled as concentrated forces.

Once again, all the forces shown in Figure 1-3 are external forces. At every section along the beam, there also exists a system of equal magnitude, opposite direction pairs of internal forces between the atoms on either side of the section. The study of mechanics of materials or mechanics of deformable bodies depends on the calculation of these internal forces at various sections of a structure or machine element and how these forces are distributed over the sections. The determination of internal forces is discussed in Section 1-5.

In our previous discussion of loads (forces), we saw that the loads might be concentrated forces or distributed forces. Furthermore, we assumed that the forces did not vary with time, that is, they were *static* loads. In many situations, loads may be a function of time. For example, a sustained load is a load that is constant over a long period of time, such as the weight of a structure (called *dead* load). This type of load is treated in the same manner as a static load; however, for some materials and conditions of temperature and stress, the resistance to failure may

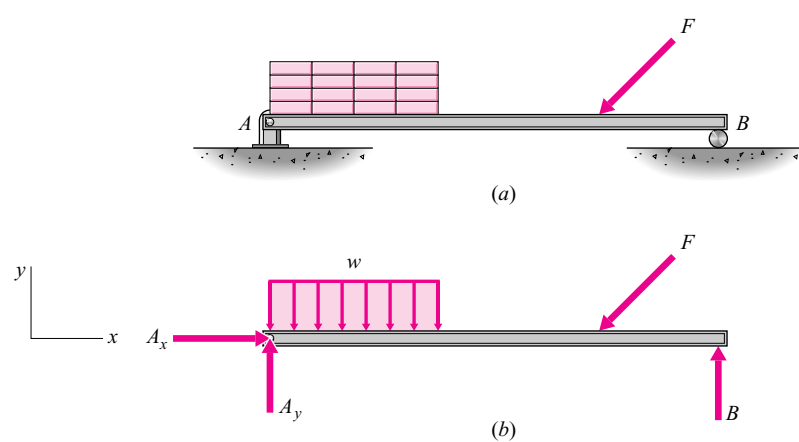


Figure 1-3

