

1.1 FLUID - DEFINITION

Introduction: In general matter can be distinguished by the physical forms known as solid, liquid, and gas. The liquid and gaseous phases are usually combined and given a common name of fluid. Solids differ from fluids on account of their molecular structure (spacing of molecules and ease with which they can move). The intermolecular forces are large in a solid, smaller in a liquid and extremely small in gas.

Fluid mechanics is the study of fluids at rest or in motion. It has traditionally been applied in such area as the design of pumps, compressor, design of dam and canal, design of piping and ducting in chemical plants, the aerodynamics of airplanes and automobiles. In recent years fluid mechanics is truly a ‘high-tech’ discipline and many exciting areas have been developed like the aerodynamics of multistory buildings, fluid mechanics of atmosphere, sports, and micro fluids.

Definition of Fluid: A *fluid* is a substance which deforms continuously under the action of shearing forces, however small they may be. Conversely, it follows that: If a fluid is at rest, there can be no shearing forces acting and, therefore, all forces in the fluid must be perpendicular to the planes upon which they act.

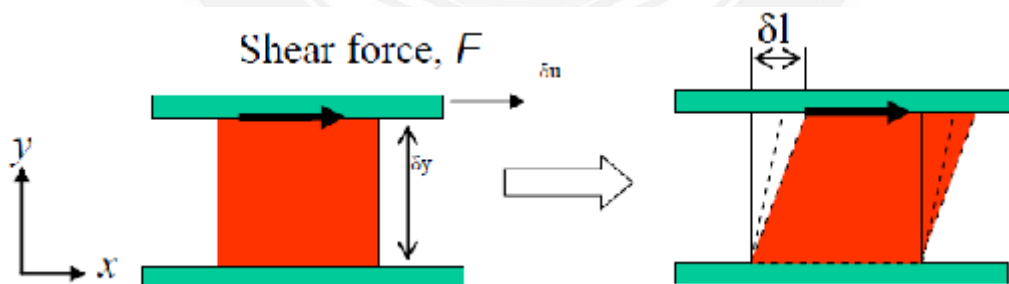


Figure 1.1.1 Deformation of a Solid and a Fluid Exposed to an applied Force

[Source: “https://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Fluid_Mechanics_for_Mechanical_Engineers/Introduction”]

Fluid deforms continuously under the action of a shear force

$$\tau_{yx} = \frac{dF_x}{dA_y} = f(\text{Deformation Rate})$$

Shear stress in a moving fluid:

Although there can be no shear stress in a fluid at rest, shear stresses are developed when the fluid is in motion, if the particles of the fluid move relative to each other so that they have different velocities, causing the original shape of the fluid to become distorted. If, on the other hand, the velocity of the fluid is same at every point, no

shear stresses will be produced, since the fluid particles are at rest relative to each other.

Differences between solids and fluids: The differences between the behaviour of solids and fluids under an applied force are as follows:

- i. For a solid, the strain is a function of the applied stress, providing that the elastic limit is not exceeded. For a fluid, the rate of strain is proportional to the applied stress.
- ii. The strain in a solid is independent of the time over which the force is applied and, if the elastic limit is not exceeded, the deformation disappears when the force is removed. A fluid continues to flow as long as the force is applied and will not recover its original form when the force is removed.

Differences between liquids and gases:

Although liquids and gases both share the common characteristics of fluids, they have many distinctive characteristics of their own. A liquid is difficult to compress and, for many purposes, may be regarded as incompressible. A given mass of liquid occupies a fixed volume, irrespective of the size or shape of its container, and a free surface is formed if the volume of the container is greater than that of the liquid.

A gas is comparatively easy to compress (Fig.1). Changes of volume with pressure are large, cannot normally be neglected and are related to changes of temperature. A given mass of gas has no fixed volume and will expand continuously unless restrained by a containing vessel. It will completely fill any vessel in which it is placed and, therefore, does not form a free surface.

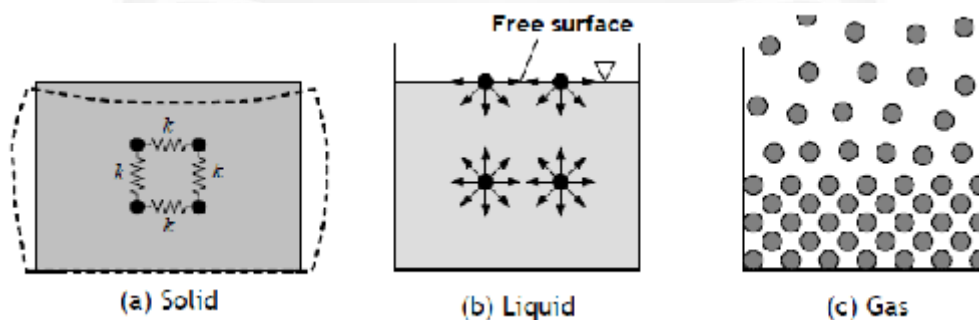


Figure 1.1.2 Comparison of Solid, Liquid and Gas

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