September 16, 2015 Physics 131 Prof. E. F. Redish

Theme Music: Run Like an Antelope *Phish*

Cartoon: Johnny Hart BC



9/16/15

Physics 131

Foothold ideas: Acceleration



Average acceleration is defined by

 $\langle \vec{a} \rangle = \frac{\Delta \vec{v}}{\Delta t} = \frac{\text{change in velocity}}{\text{time it took to do it}}$

Note: an average acceleration goes with a <u>time interval</u>.

 Instantaneous acceleration is what we get when we consider a very small time interval (compared to times we care about)

$$\vec{a} = \frac{d\vec{v}}{dt}$$

Note: an instantaneous acceleration goes with a <u>specific time</u>.

Technical term alert!

- Note that in physics we use the term
 "acceleration" in a technically defined way:
 - "acceleration" = changing velocity
- The object may be speeding up or slowing down or keeping the same speed and changing direction. We still say "it is accelerating."
- In common speech
 "acceleration" = speeding up,
 "deceleration" = slowing down, and
 "turning"=changing direction.
- How many (physics) accelerators are there on your car? 9/16/15
 Physics 131

Uniformly changing motion

- If an object moves so that it changes its velocity by the same amount in each unit of time, we say it is in <u>uniformly accelerated motion</u>.
- This means the average acceleration will be the same no matter what interval of time we choose.









- Seeing from the motion
- Seeing consistency (graphs & equations)