

Terminology in compressible and incompressible in fluid dynamics

Magnetohydrodynamics

Magnetohydrodynamics is the multi-disciplinary study of the flow of electrically conducting fluids in electromagnetic fields. Examples of such fluids include plasmas, liquid metals, and salt water. The fluid flow equations are solved simultaneously with Maxwell's equations of electromagnetism.

Other approximations

There are a large number of other possible approximations to fluid dynamic problems. Some of the more commonly used are listed below.

- The **Boussinesq approximation** neglects variations in density except to calculate buoyancy forces. It is often used in free convection problems where density changes are small.
- **Lubrication theory** and **Hele-Shaw flow** exploits the large aspect ratio of the domain to show that certain terms in the equations are small and so can be neglected.
- **Slender-body theory** is a methodology used in Stokes flow problems to estimate the force on, or flow field around, a long slender object in a viscous fluid.
- The **shallow-water equations** can be used to describe a layer of relatively inviscid fluid with a free surface, in which surface gradients are small.
- The **Boussinesq equations** are applicable to surface waves on thicker layers of fluid and with steeper surface slopes.

- **Darcy's law** is used for flow in porous media, and works with variables averaged over several pore-widths.
- In rotating systems, the **quasi-geostrophic approximation** assumes an almost perfect balance between pressure gradients and the Coriolis force. It is useful in the study of atmospheric dynamics.

Terminology in incompressible fluid dynamics

The concepts of total pressure and dynamic pressure arise from Bernoulli's equation and are significant in the study of all fluid flows. (These two pressures are not pressures in the usual sense—they cannot be measured using an aneroid, Bourdon tube or mercury column.) To avoid potential ambiguity when referring to pressure in fluid dynamics, many authors use the term static pressure to distinguish it from total pressure and dynamic pressure. Static pressure is identical to pressure and can be identified for every point in a fluid flow field.

In *Aerodynamics*, L.J. Clancy writes^[6]: *To distinguish it from the total and dynamic pressures, the actual pressure of the fluid, which is associated not with its motion but with its state, is often referred to as the static pressure, but where the term pressure alone is used it refers to this static pressure.*

A point in a fluid flow where the flow has come to rest (i.e. speed is equal to zero adjacent to some solid body immersed in the fluid flow) is of special significance. It is of such importance that it is given a special name—a stagnation point. The static pressure at the stagnation point is of special significance and is given its own name—stagnation pressure. In incompressible flows, the stagnation pressure at a stagnation point is equal to the total pressure throughout the flow field.

Terminology in compressible fluid dynamics

In a compressible fluid, such as air, the temperature and density are essential when determining the state of the fluid. In addition to the concept of total pressure (also known as stagnation pressure), the concepts of total (or stagnation) temperature and total (or stagnation) density are also essential in any study of compressible fluid flows. To avoid potential ambiguity when

referring to temperature and density, many authors use the terms static temperature and static density. Static temperature is identical to temperature; and static density is identical to density; and both can be identified for every point in a fluid flow field.

The temperature and density at a stagnation point are called stagnation temperature and stagnation density.

A similar approach is also taken with the thermodynamic properties of compressible fluids. Many authors use the terms total (or stagnation) enthalpy and total (or stagnation) entropy. The terms static enthalpy and static entropy appear to be less common, but where they are used they mean nothing more than enthalpy and entropy respectively, and the prefix "static" is being used to avoid ambiguity with their 'total' or 'stagnation' counterparts. Because the 'total' flow conditions are defined by isentropically bringing the fluid to rest, the total (or stagnation) entropy is by definition always equal to the "static" entropy.

The Mach number is commonly used both with objects traveling at high speed in a fluid, and with high-speed fluid flows inside channels such as nozzles, diffusers or wind tunnels. As it is defined as a ratio of two speeds, it is a dimensionless number. At Standard Sea Level conditions (corresponding to a temperature of 15 degrees Celsius), the speed of sound is $340.3 \text{ m/s}^{[3]}$ (1225 km/h, or 761.2 mph, or 661.5 knots, or 1116 ft/s) in the Earth's atmosphere. The speed represented by Mach 1 is not a constant; for example, it is mostly dependent on temperature and atmospheric composition and largely independent of pressure. In the stratosphere, where the temperatures are constant, it does not vary with altitude even though the air pressure changes significantly with altitude.

Since the speed of sound increases as the temperature increases, the actual speed of an object traveling at Mach 1 will depend on the fluid temperature around it. Mach number is useful because the fluid behaves in a similar way at the same Mach number. So, an aircraft traveling at Mach 1 at 20°C or 68°F will experience shock waves in much the same manner as when it is traveling at Mach 1 at 11,000 m (36,000 ft) at -50°C or -58°F, even though it is traveling at only 86% of its speed at higher temperature like 20°C or 68°F.