



Flipping Physics Lecture Notes:
Density

<http://www.flippingphysics.com/density.html>

Density is a material property of any pure substance. For example, the density of pure copper is 8.96 g/cm^3 . And, any object made of pure copper, regardless of size, will have that same density of 8.96 g/cm^3 .

The symbol for density is ρ . Which is the lowercase, Greek letter “rho”.

The equation for density is: $\rho = \frac{\text{mass}}{\text{volume}}$

Let's determine the densities of two, equal diameter spheres. One steel and one wood:

$$\text{diameter} = 50.7\text{mm} \Rightarrow r = \frac{\text{diameter}}{2} = \frac{50.7\text{mm}}{2} = 25.35\text{mm} \left(\frac{1\text{cm}}{10\text{mm}} \right) = 2.535\text{cm}$$

$$V_{\text{sphere}} = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3 = \frac{4}{3}\pi (2.535\text{cm})^3 = 68.2374\text{cm}^3 = V_{\text{steel}} = V_{\text{wood}}$$

$$m_{\text{wood}} = ??\text{g} \ \& \ m_{\text{steel}} = 535\text{g}$$

$$\rho_{\text{steel}} = \frac{m_{\text{steel}}}{V_{\text{steel}}} = \frac{535\text{g}}{68.2374\text{cm}^3} = 7.84027 \Rightarrow \rho_{\text{steel}} \approx 7.84 \frac{\text{g}}{\text{cm}^3} \text{ (observed value)}$$

$$\rho_{\text{wood}} = \frac{m_{\text{wood}}}{V_{\text{wood}}} = \frac{45\text{g}}{68.2374\text{cm}^3} = 0.65946 \Rightarrow \rho_{\text{wood}} \approx 0.66 \frac{\text{g}}{\text{cm}^3} \text{ (observed value)}$$

The accepted value for the density of steel is roughly $7.7 - 8.0 \text{ g/cm}^3$.[♥]

The accepted value for the density of birch wood is roughly $0.5 - 0.8 \text{ g/cm}^3$.^{*}

So, both of our observed values are within the range of their accepted values.

We have just shown that steel is more dense than wood, and steel has a larger mass per unit volume than wood.

[♥] <https://hypertextbook.com/facts/2004/KarenSutherland.shtml>

^{*} https://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/wood-density-d_40.html