

Parts of a Longitudinal Wave

[specifically, focusing on a longitudinal wave of air molecules]

Review: Parts of a Transverse Wave

Crests
The tops of a transverse wave
Trough
The bottom of a transverse wave
Wavelength
The distance from crest to crest or from trough to trough
Amplitude
The distance from the middle of a wave to the height of a crest or trough.

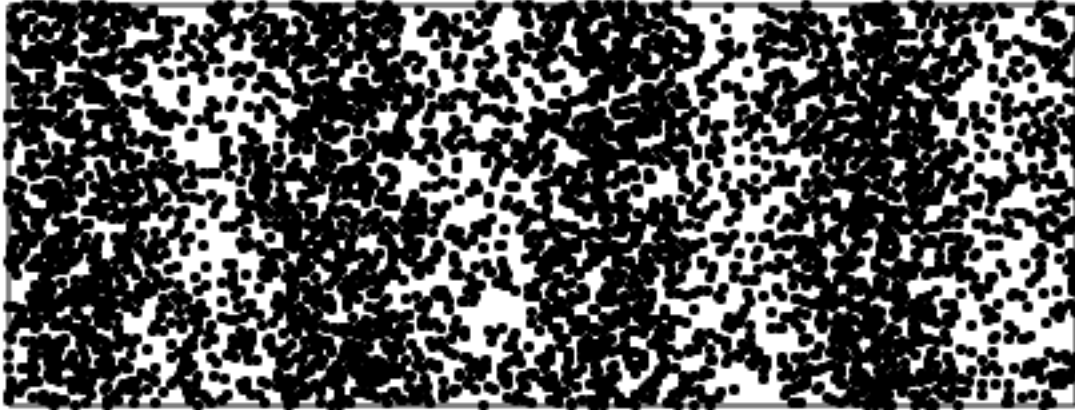
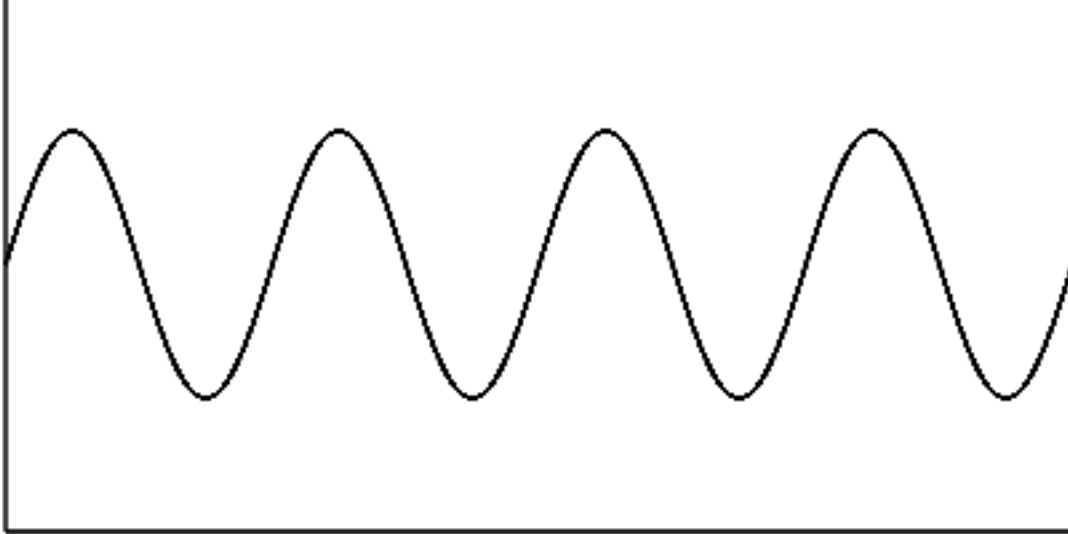
New Information: Parts of a Longitudinal Wave

Compression Zone
Area with many compressed air molecules and higher air pressure. Corresponds with a <i>crest</i> of a transverse wave.
Rarefaction Zone
Area with fewer air molecules and lower air pressure. Corresponds with <i>trough</i> of a transverse wave.
Wavelength
Distance between two compression zones or between two rarefaction zones. Same as the wavelength of a transverse wave.
Amplitude
How much the wave changes the air pressure. Cannot be easily drawn on a picture of a longitudinal wave. (Air pressure at compression zone – Air pressure at rarefaction zone) / 2

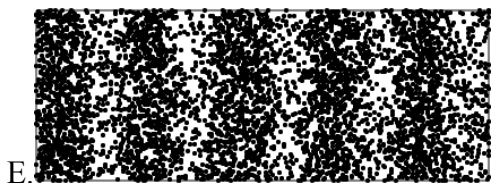
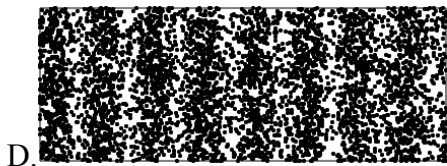
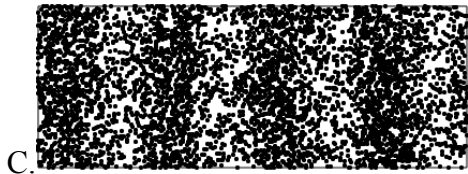
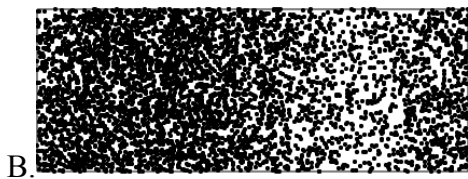
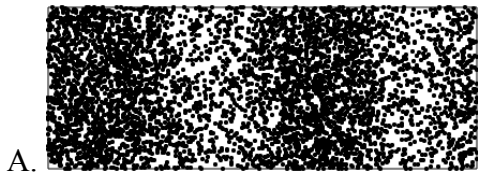
The following picture shows a transverse wave, and below it a longitudinal wave.

On the transverse wave, label the crests, troughs, and wavelength.

On the longitudinal wave, label the compression zones, rarefaction zones, and wavelength.



The following 5 longitudinal waves all have the same amplitude but different wavelengths. Rank them from longest wavelength to shortest wavelength.



The following 4 longitudinal waves have the same wavelength but different amplitudes. Rank them from greatest amplitude to least amplitude.

