CONDUCTORS AND INSULATORS

In static electricity, matter or substances are classified according to the degree of resistance they offer to the passage of electrons though them. These classes are: *conductors* and *insulators*.

Conductors are materials that allow electrons to pass through them easily. Examples are almost all metals, damp air, graphite, acids, salt solutions, the earth, and the human body.

Insulators are materials that do not allow electrons to pass through them easily. Examples of insulators are plastic, polyethene, bakelite, ebonite, paper, dry hair, silk, oils, glass, sulphur and wood.

As a general rule, a good conductor of heat is a good conductor of electricity. Metals are usually coated with insulating materials before they are charged. If they are supported with the hand, the charges produced in them will immediately flow through the human body to the earth.

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