

TABLE 1.3 Approximate Values of Some Time Intervals

	Interval (s)
Age of the Universe	5×10^{17}
Age of the Earth	1.3×10^{17}
Average age of a college student	6.3×10^8
One year	3.16×10^7
One day (time for one rotation of the Earth about its axis)	8.64×10^4
Time between normal heartbeats	8×10^{-1}
Period of audible sound waves	$\sim 10^{-3}$
Period of typical radio waves	$\sim 10^{-6}$
Period of vibration of an atom in a solid	$\sim 10^{-13}$
Period of visible light waves	$\sim 10^{-15}$
Duration of a nuclear collision	$\sim 10^{-22}$
Time for light to cross a proton	$\sim 10^{-24}$

time are the foot (ft), slug, and second, respectively. In this text we shall use SI units because they are almost universally accepted in science and industry. We shall make some limited use of British engineering units in the study of classical mechanics.

In addition to the basic SI units of meter, kilogram, and second, we can also use other units, such as millimeters and nanoseconds, where the prefixes *milli-* and *nano-* denote various powers of ten. Some of the most frequently used prefixes for the various powers of ten and their abbreviations are listed in Table 1.4. For

TABLE 1.4 Prefixes for SI Units

Power	Prefix	Abbreviation
10^{-24}	yocto	y
10^{-21}	zepto	z
10^{-18}	atto	a
10^{-15}	femto	f
10^{-12}	pico	p
10^{-9}	nano	n
10^{-6}	micro	μ
10^{-3}	milli	m
10^{-2}	centi	c
10^{-1}	deci	d
10^1	deka	da
10^3	kilo	k
10^6	mega	M
10^9	giga	G
10^{12}	tera	T
10^{15}	peta	P
10^{18}	exa	E
10^{21}	zetta	Z
10^{24}	yotta	Y