















4









Procedure for Drawing a Free-Body Diagram
Since we must account for <i>all the forces acting on the particle</i> when applying the equations of equilibrium, the importance of first drawing a free-body diagram cannot be overemphasized. To construct a free-body diagram, the following three steps are necessary.
Draw Outlined Shape.
Imagine the particle to be <i>isolated</i> or cut "free" from its surroundings by drawing its outlined shape.
Show All Forces.
Indicate on this sketch <i>all</i> the forces that act <i>on the particle</i> . These forces can be <i>active forces</i> , which tend to set the particle in motion, or they can be <i>reactive forces</i> which are the result of the constraints or supports that tend to prevent motion. To account for all these forces, it may be helpful to trace around the particle's boundary, carefully noting each force acting on it.
Identify Each Force.
The forces that are <i>known</i> should be labeled with their proper magnitudes and directions. Letters are used to represent the magnitudes and directions of forces that are unknown.







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Problem solutions which do not include a FBD will receive substantially reduced credit. You will never get full credit for a problem solution if you don't draw a FBD

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