CHAPTER NINE

Center of Gravity and Centroid

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- **To discuss the concept of the center of gravity, center of mass, and the centroid.**
- **To show how to determine the location of the center of gravity and centroid for a system of discrete particles and a body of arbitrary shape.**
- **To use the theorems of Pappus and Guldinus for finding the surface area and volume for a body having axial symmetry.**
- **To present a method for finding the resultant of a general distributed loading and show how it applies to finding the resultant force of a pressure loading caused by a fluid.**

9.1 Center of Gravity, Center of Mass, and the Centroid of a Body.

In this section we will first show how to locate the center of gravity for a body, and then we will show that the center of mass and the centroid of a body can be developed using this same method.

Center of Gravity. A body is composed of an infinite number of particles of differential size, and so if the body is located within a gravitational field, then each of these particles will have a weight dW, Fig. 9–1*a*. These weights will form an approximately parallel force system, and the resultant of this system is the total weight of the body, which passes through a single point called the *center of gravity, G*, Fig. 9–1*b*. *

* *This is true as long as the gravity field is assumed to have the same magnitude and direction everywhere. That assumption is appropriate for most engineering applications, since gravity does not vary appreciably between, for instance, the bottom and the top of a building.*

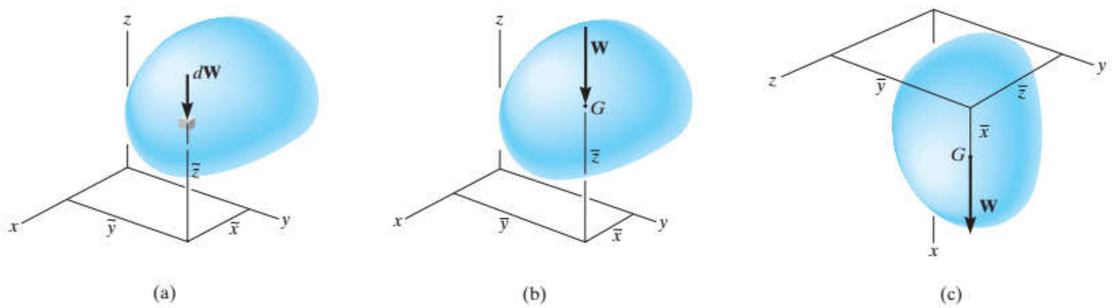


Fig. 9–1

The weight of the body is the sum of the weights of all of its particles, that is:

$$+\downarrow F_R = \Sigma F_z; \qquad W = \int dW$$

The location of the center of gravity, measured from the y axis, is determined by equating the moment of W about the y axis, Fig. 9–1b, to the sum of the moments of the weights of the particles about this same axis. If dW is located at point (x, y, z), Fig. 9–1a, then:

$$(M_R)_y = \Sigma M_y\,; \qquad \bar{x}W = \int \tilde{x}\,dW$$

Similarly, if moments are summed about the x axis,

$$(M_R)_x = \Sigma M_x; \qquad \bar{y}W = \int \tilde{y}\,dW$$

Finally, imagine that the body is fixed within the coordinate system and this system is rotated 90 about the y axis, Fig. 9–1c. Then the sum of the moments about the y axis gives:

$$(M_R)_y = \Sigma M_y; \qquad \bar{z}W = \int \tilde{z}\,dW$$

Therefore, the location of the center of gravity G with respect to the x, y, z axes becomes:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int \tilde{x}\,dW}{\int dW} \qquad \bar{y} = \frac{\int \tilde{y}\,dW}{\int dW} \qquad \bar{z} = \frac{\int \tilde{z}\,dW}{\int dW} \qquad (9\text{–}1)$$

Center of Mass of a Body.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int \tilde{x}\, dm}{\int dm} \quad \bar{y} = \frac{\int \tilde{y}\, dm}{\int dm} \quad \bar{z} = \frac{\int \tilde{z}\, dm}{\int dm} \qquad (9\text{–}2)$$

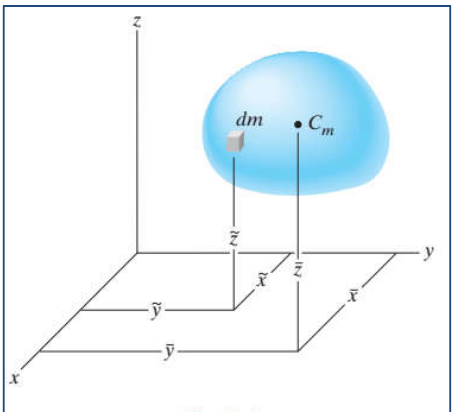


Fig. 9–2

Centroid of a Volume.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int_V \tilde{x}\, dV}{\int_V dV} \quad \bar{y} = \frac{\int_V \tilde{y}\, dV}{\int_V dV} \quad \bar{z} = \frac{\int_V \tilde{z}\, dV}{\int_V dV} \qquad (9\text{–}3)$$

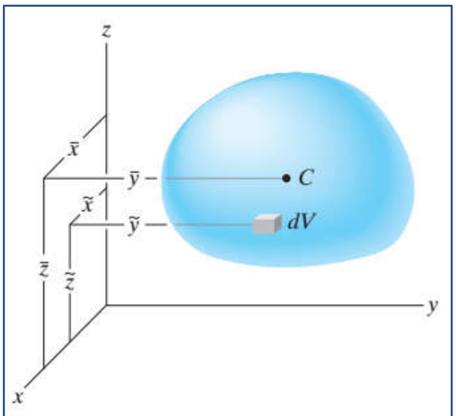
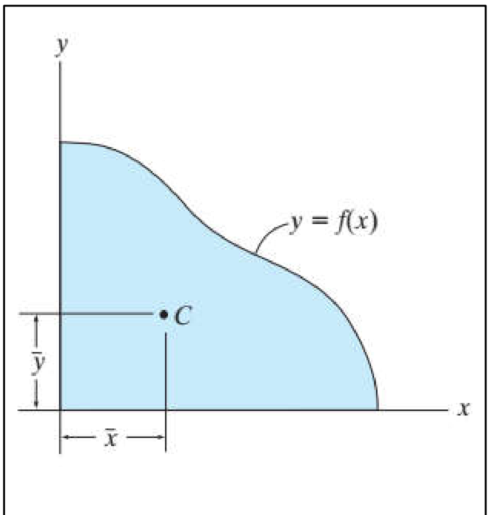


Fig. 9–3

Centroid of an Area. If an area lies in the x–y plane and is bounded by the curve $y = f(x)$, as shown in Fig. 9–5*a*, then its Centroid will be in this plane and can be determined from integrals similar to Eqs. 9–3 , namely,

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{x}\, dA}{\int_A dA} \quad \bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\, dA}{\int_A dA} \qquad (9\text{–}4)$$



(a)

Fig. 9–5

These integrals can be evaluated by performing a ***single integration*** if we use a ***rectangular strip*** for the differential area element. For example, if a vertical strip is used, Fig. 9–5*b*, the area of the element is $dA = y\,dx$, and its centroid is located at $\tilde{x} = x$ and $\tilde{y} = y/2$.

If we consider a horizontal strip, Fig. 9–5*c*, then: $dA = x\,dy$, and its centroid is located at $\tilde{x} = x/2$ and $\tilde{y} = y$.

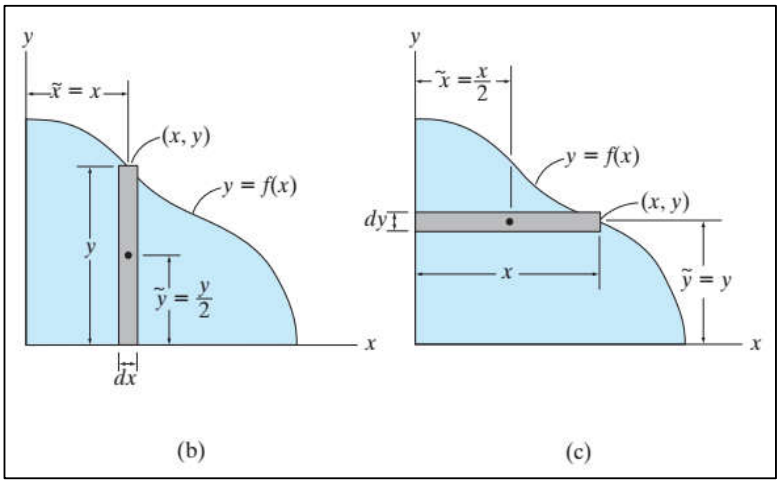


Fig. 9–5

9.2 Composite Bodies

A ***composite body*** consists of a series of connected "simpler" shaped bodies, which may be rectangular, triangular, semicircular, etc. Such a body can often be divided into its composite parts and, provided the *weight* and location of the center of gravity of each part are known, we can then eliminate the need for integration to determine the center of gravity for the entire body. However, rather than account for an infinite number of differential weights, we have instead a finite number of weights. Therefore,

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\Sigma \tilde{x} W}{\Sigma W} \quad \bar{y} = \frac{\Sigma \tilde{y} W}{\Sigma W} \quad \bar{z} = \frac{\Sigma \tilde{z} W}{\Sigma W} \qquad (9\text{–}6)$$

Here

$\bar{x}, \bar{y}, \bar{z}$ represent the coordinates of the center of gravity *G* of the composite body.

$\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}, \tilde{z}$ represent the coordinates of the center of gravity of each composite part of the body.

ΣW is the sum of the weights of all the composite parts of the body.

EXAMPLE 9.3

Determine the distance $\bar{y}$ measured from the x axis to the centroid of the area of the triangle shown in Fig. 9–10.

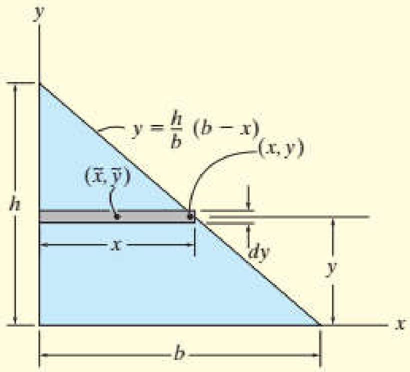


Fig. 9–10

SOLUTION

Differential Element. Consider a rectangular element having a thickness dy, and located in an arbitrary position so that it intersects the boundary at (x, y), Fig. 9–10.

Area and Moment Arms. The area of the element is $dA = x\,dy = \frac{b}{h}(h - y)\,dy$, and its centroid is located a distance $\tilde{y} = y$ from the x axis.

Integration. Applying the second of Eqs. 9–4 and integrating with respect to y yields

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^h y\left[\frac{b}{h}(h - y)\,dy\right]}{\int_0^h \frac{b}{h}(h - y)\,dy} = \frac{\frac{1}{6}bh^2}{\frac{1}{2}bh}$$

$$= \frac{h}{3} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

NOTE: This result is valid for any shape of triangle. It states that the centroid is located at one-third the height, measured from the base of the triangle.

EXAMPLE 9.4

Locate the centroid for the area of a quarter circle shown in Fig. 9–11.

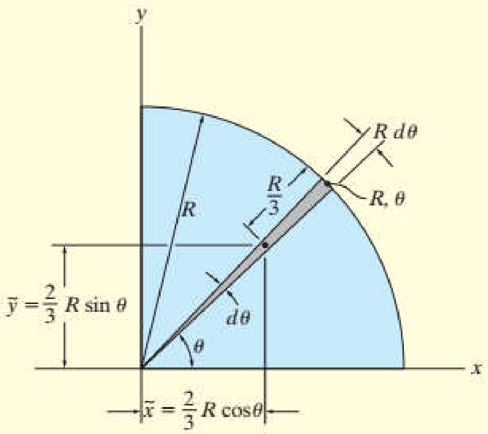


Fig. 9–11

SOLUTION

Differential Element. Polar coordinates will be used, since the boundary is circular. We choose the element in the shape of a *triangle*, Fig. 9–11. (Actually the shape is a circular sector; however, neglecting higher-order differentials, the element becomes triangular.) The element intersects the curve at point (R, θ).

Area and Moment Arms. The area of the element is

$$dA = \tfrac{1}{2}(R)(R\,d\theta) = \frac{R^2}{2}d\theta$$

and using the results of Example 9.3, the centroid of the (triangular) element is located at $\tilde{x} = \frac{2}{3}R\cos\theta$, $\tilde{y} = \frac{2}{3}R\sin\theta$.

Integrations. Applying Eqs. 9–4 and integrating with respect to θ, we obtain

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{x}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{\pi/2}\left(\frac{2}{3}R\cos\theta\right)\frac{R^2}{2}d\theta}{\int_0^{\pi/2}\frac{R^2}{2}d\theta} = \frac{\left(\frac{2}{3}R\right)\int_0^{\pi/2}\cos\theta\,d\theta}{\int_0^{\pi/2}d\theta} = \frac{4R}{3\pi} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{\pi/2}\left(\frac{2}{3}R\sin\theta\right)\frac{R^2}{2}d\theta}{\int_0^{\pi/2}\frac{R^2}{2}d\theta} = \frac{\left(\frac{2}{3}R\right)\int_0^{\pi/2}\sin\theta\,d\theta}{\int_0^{\pi/2}d\theta} = \frac{4R}{3\pi} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

EXAMPLE 9.5

Locate the centroid of the area shown in Fig. 9–12*a*.

SOLUTION I

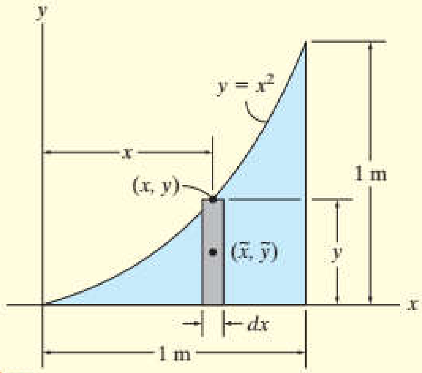
Differential Element. A differential element of thickness dx is shown in Fig. 9–12*a*. The element intersects the curve at the *arbitrary point* (x, y), and so it has a height y.

Area and Moment Arms. The area of the element is $dA = y\,dx$, and its centroid is located at $\tilde{x} = x$, $\tilde{y} = y/2$.

Integrations. Applying Eqs. 9–4 and integrating with respect to x yields

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{x}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} xy\,dx}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} y\,dx} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} x^3\,dx}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} x^2\,dx} = \frac{0.250}{0.333} = 0.75\text{ m} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (y/2)y\,dx}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} y\,dx} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (x^2/2)x^2\,dx}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} x^2\,dx} = \frac{0.100}{0.333} = 0.3\text{ m} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$



(a)

SOLUTION II

Differential Element. The differential element of thickness dy is shown in Fig. 9–12*b*. The element intersects the curve at the *arbitrary point* (x, y), and so it has a length $(1 - x)$.

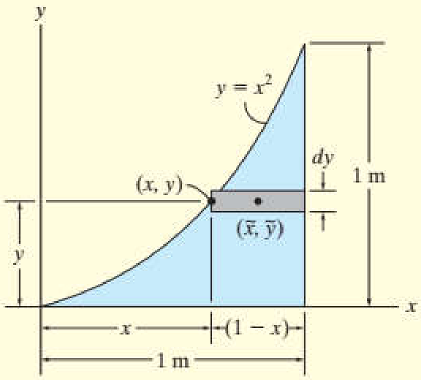
Area and Moment Arms. The area of the element is $dA = (1 - x)\,dy$, and its centroid is located at

$$\tilde{x} = x + \left(\frac{1 - x}{2}\right) = \frac{1 + x}{2},\ \tilde{y} = y$$

Integrations. Applying Eqs. 9–4 and integrating with respect to y, we obtain

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{x}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} [(1 + x)/2](1 - x)\,dy}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (1 - x)\,dy} = \frac{\frac{1}{2}\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (1 - y)\,dy}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (1 - \sqrt{y})\,dy} = \frac{0.250}{0.333} = 0.75\text{ m} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} y(1 - x)\,dy}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (1 - x)\,dy} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (y - y^{3/2})\,dy}{\int_0^{1\text{ m}} (1 - \sqrt{y})\,dy} = \frac{0.100}{0.333} = 0.3\text{ m} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$



(b)

Fig. 9–12

NOTE: Plot these results and notice that they seem reasonable. Also, for this problem, elements of thickness dx offer a simpler solution.

EXAMPLE 9.6

Locate the centroid of the semi-elliptical area shown in Fig. 9–13*a*.

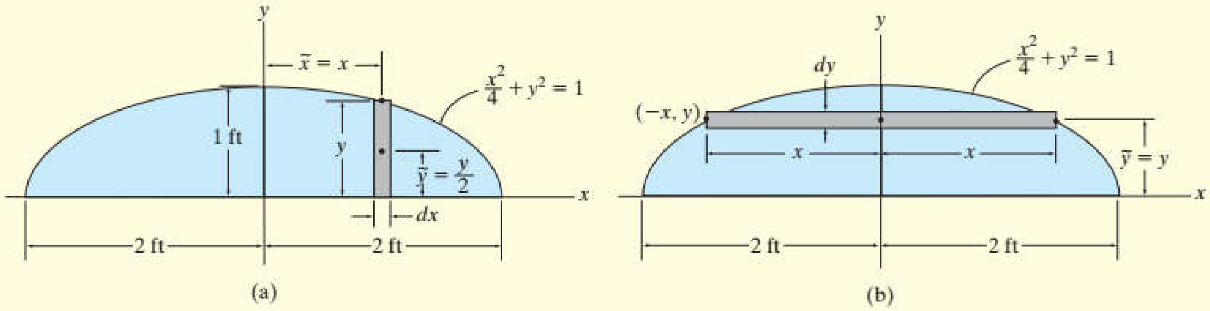


Fig. 9–13

SOLUTION I

Differential Element. The rectangular differential element parallel to the y axis shown shaded in Fig. 9–13*a* will be considered. This element has a thickness of dx and a height of y.

Area and Moment Arms. Thus, the area is $dA = y\,dx$, and its centroid is located at $\tilde{x} = x$ and $\tilde{y} = y/2$.

Integration. Since the area is symmetrical about the y axis,

$$\bar{x} = 0 \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

Applying the second of Eqs. 9–4 with $y = \sqrt{1 - \frac{x^2}{4}}$, we have

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_{-2\text{ ft}}^{2\text{ ft}} \frac{y}{2}(y\,dx)}{\int_{-2\text{ ft}}^{2\text{ ft}} y\,dx} = \frac{\frac{1}{2}\int_{-2\text{ ft}}^{2\text{ ft}}\left(1 - \frac{x^2}{4}\right)dx}{\int_{-2\text{ ft}}^{2\text{ ft}} \sqrt{1 - \frac{x^2}{4}}\,dx} = \frac{4/3}{\pi} = 0.424\text{ ft} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

SOLUTION II

Differential Element. The shaded rectangular differential element of thickness dy and width $2x$, parallel to the x axis, will be considered, Fig. 9–13*b*.

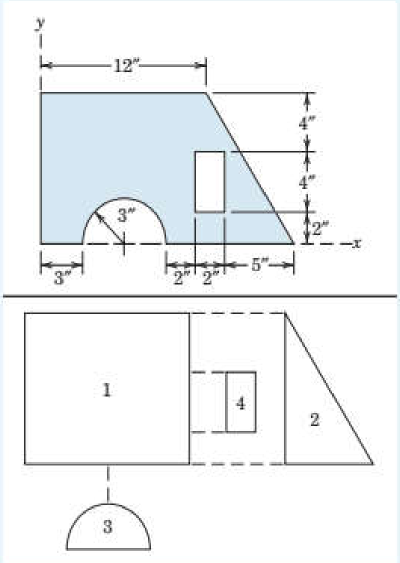
Area and Moment Arms. The area is $dA = 2x\,dy$, and its centroid is at $\tilde{x} = 0$ and $\tilde{y} = y$.

Integration. Applying the second of Eqs. 9–4, with $x = 2\sqrt{1 - y^2}$, we have

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\int_A \tilde{y}\,dA}{\int_A dA} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ ft}} y(2x\,dy)}{\int_0^{1\text{ ft}} 2x\,dy} = \frac{\int_0^{1\text{ ft}} 4y\sqrt{1 - y^2}\,dy}{\int_0^{1\text{ ft}} 4\sqrt{1 - y^2}\,dy} = \frac{4/3}{\pi}\text{ ft} = 0.424\text{ ft} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

SAMPLE PROBLEM 5/6

Locate the centroid of the shaded area.



Solution. The composite area is divided into the four elementary shapes shown in the lower figure. The centroid locations of all these shapes may be obtained from Table D/3. Note that the areas of the "holes" (parts 3 and 4) are taken as negative in the following table:

PART	A in.^{2}	$\bar{x}$ in.	$\bar{y}$ in.	$\bar{x}A$ in.^{3}	$\bar{y}A$ in.^{3}
1	120	6	5	720	600
2	30	14	10/3	420	100
3	−14.14	6	1.273	−84.8	−18
4	−8	12	4	−96	−32
TOTALS	127.9			959	650

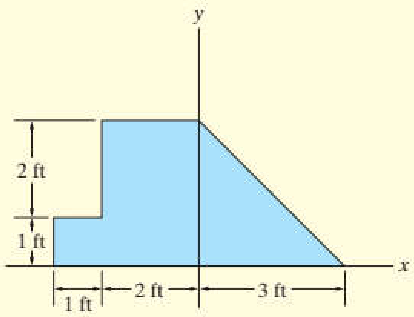
The area counterparts to Eqs. 5/7 are now applied and yield

$$\left[\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma A\bar{x}}{\Sigma A}\right] \qquad \bar{X} = \frac{959}{127.9} = 7.50 \text{ in.} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

$$\left[\bar{Y} = \frac{\Sigma A\bar{y}}{\Sigma A}\right] \qquad \bar{Y} = \frac{650}{127.9} = 5.08 \text{ in.} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

EXAMPLE 9.10

Locate the centroid of the plate area shown in Fig. 9–17*a*.

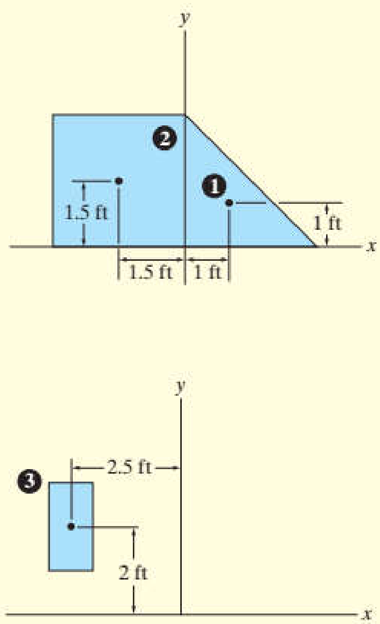


(a)

Fig. 9–17

SOLUTION

Composite Parts. The plate is divided into three segments as shown in Fig. 9–17*b*. Here the area of the small rectangle ③ is considered "negative" since it must be subtracted from the larger one ②.



(b)

Moment Arms. The centroid of each segment is located as indicated in the figure. Note that the $\tilde{x}$ coordinates of ② and ③ are *negative*.

Summations. Taking the data from Fig. 9–17*b*, the calculations are tabulated as follows:

Segment	A (ft^2)	$\tilde{x}$ (ft)	$\tilde{y}$ (ft)	$\tilde{x}A$ (ft^3)	$\tilde{y}A$ (ft^3)
1	$\frac{1}{2}(3)(3) = 4.5$	1	1	4.5	4.5
2	$(3)(3) = 9$	-1.5	1.5	-13.5	13.5
3	$-(2)(1) = -2$	-2.5	2	5	-4
	$\Sigma A = 11.5$			$\Sigma\tilde{x}A = -4$	$\Sigma\tilde{y}A = 14$

Thus,

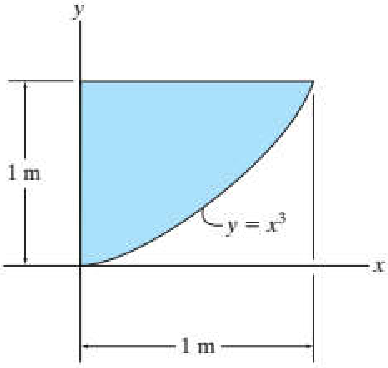
$$\bar{x} = \frac{\Sigma\tilde{x}A}{\Sigma A} = \frac{-4}{11.5} = -0.348 \text{ ft} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

$$\bar{y} = \frac{\Sigma\tilde{y}A}{\Sigma A} = \frac{14}{11.5} = 1.22 \text{ ft} \qquad \textit{Ans.}$$

NOTE: If these results are plotted in Fig. 9–17*a*, the location of point *C* seems reasonable.

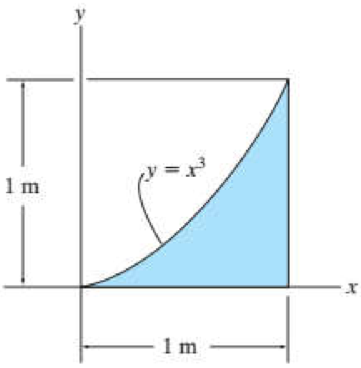
FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

F9–1. Determine the centroid $(\bar{x}, \bar{y})$ of the shaded area.



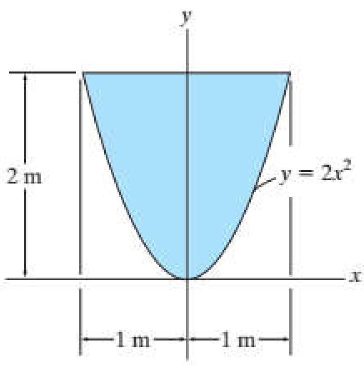
F9–1

F9–2. Determine the centroid $(\bar{x}, \bar{y})$ of the shaded area.



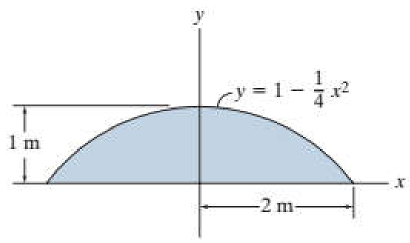
F9–2

F9–3. Determine the centroid $\bar{y}$ of the shaded area.



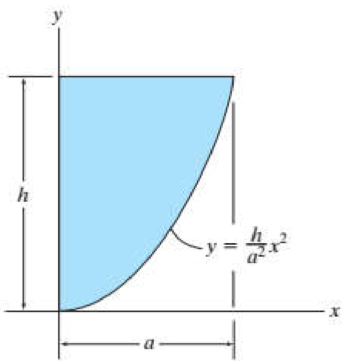
F9–3

9–6. Locate the centroid $\bar{y}$ of the area.



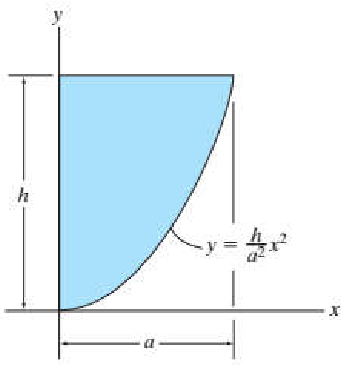
Prob. 9–6

9–7. Locate the centroid $\bar{x}$ of the parabolic area.



Prob. 9–7

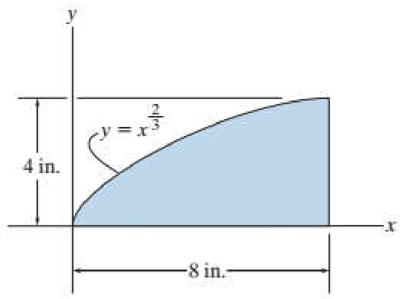
***9–8.** Locate the centroid $\bar{y}$ of the parabolic area.



Prob. 9–8

9–9. Locate the centroid $\bar{x}$ of the area.

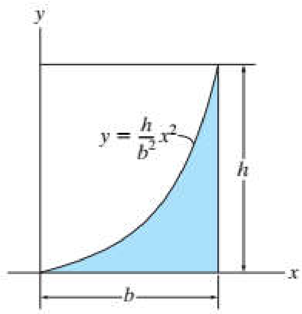
9–10. Locate the centroid $\bar{y}$ of the area.



Probs. 9–9/10

9–11. Locate the centroid $\bar{x}$ of the area.

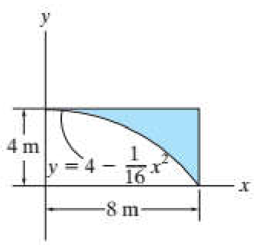
***9–12.** Locate the centroid $\bar{y}$ of the area.



Probs. 9–11/12

9–13. Locate the centroid $\bar{x}$ of the area.

9–14. Locate the centroid $\bar{y}$ of the area.



Probs. 9–13/14