

Discovering Magnets

Chapter 4: Exploring Magnets · Topic 1

Key Concept

The word 'magnet' is believed to come from Magnesia, a region in ancient Greece where lodestone was found in abundance. Artificial magnets can be permanent (always magnetic, like a bar magnet) or temporary (magnetic only under certain conditions, like an electromagnet that works only when electricity flows through it). Understanding how magnets were discovered helps us appreciate how a natural phenomenon led to countless modern technologies, from MRI machines in hospitals to maglev trains.

Quick Revision Notes

- Magnetite (lodestone) is a naturally occurring magnetic mineral, the first magnet discovered.
- Ancient sailors used lodestone as an early compass.
- The word 'magnet' likely comes from Magnesia, a region in ancient Greece.
- Magnets can be permanent (always magnetic) or temporary (like electromagnets).

Practice Questions

- 1 Name one material that is attracted by a magnet.
- 2 Explain how ancient sailors might have used lodestone for navigation.
- 3 Give one example of modern technology that uses magnets.