

The electrostatic energy is given by :

$$U = \sum_{i < j} \frac{q_i \cdot q_j}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{r}_i - \vec{r}_j|} + \sum_{i < j} \frac{Q_i \cdot Q_j}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_i - \vec{R}_j|} + \sum_{i,j} \frac{q_i \cdot Q_j}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{r}_i - \vec{R}_j|} \quad (1)$$

The “mechanic” energy is given by :

$$U_M = \sum_{i < j} U_{ij}(\vec{R}_i - \vec{R}_j) \quad (2)$$

If N-1 free particles are already at their final positions, the work done to brought the Nth charge is :

$$W_N = \int_{\vec{r}_N}^{\infty} q_N \cdot \left(\sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_i \cdot (\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i(\vec{r}))}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i(\vec{r})|^3} + \sum_m \frac{Q_j \cdot (\vec{r} - \vec{R}_j(\vec{r}))}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{r} - \vec{R}_j(\vec{r})|^3} \right) \cdot d\vec{r} \quad (3)$$

Where the positions of the bounded charges are functions of the positions of the Nth free charge. The total work is given by :

$$W_{total} = \sum_N W_N$$

The net force applied on jth bounded particle is zero :

$$\vec{F}_j = 0 = \sum_{k \neq j} \frac{Q_j \cdot Q_k \cdot (\vec{R}_k(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_j(\vec{r}))}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r})|^3} + \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_i \cdot Q_j \cdot (\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}_i)}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}_i|^3} + \frac{q_N \cdot Q_j \cdot (\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r})}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}|^3} + \sum_{k \neq m, j} -\vec{\nabla} \cdot U_{jk}(\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r})) \quad (4)$$

We can rewrite this equation :

$$-\frac{q_N \cdot Q_j \cdot (\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r})}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}|^3} = \sum_{k \neq j} \frac{Q_j \cdot Q_k \cdot (\vec{R}_k(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_j(\vec{r}))}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r})|^3} + \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_i \cdot Q_j \cdot (\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}_i)}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}_i|^3} + \sum_{k \neq m, j} -\vec{\nabla} \cdot U_{jk}(\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r})) \quad (5)$$

Let's replace it in the expression of the work :

$$W_N = \int_{\vec{r}_N}^{\infty} \left(\sum_{j=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_N \cdot q_i \cdot (\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i)}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i|^3} - \sum_j \left(\sum_{k \neq j} \frac{Q_j \cdot Q_k \cdot (\vec{R}_k(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_j(\vec{r}))}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r})|^3} + \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_i \cdot Q_j \cdot (\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}_i)}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{r}_i|^3} + \sum_{k \neq j} -\vec{\nabla} \cdot U_{jk}(\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r})) \right) \right) \cdot d\vec{r} \quad (6)$$

Let's now perform the integration.

$$\int_{\vec{r}_N}^{\infty} \frac{\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i}{|\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i|^3} \cdot d\vec{r} = \int_{\vec{r}_N}^{\infty} \frac{|\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i| \cdot \cos(\theta_i)}{|\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i|^3} dr = \int_{\vec{r}_N}^{\infty} \frac{\cos(\theta_i)}{|\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i|^2} dr = \left[\frac{1}{|\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i|} \right]_{\vec{r}_N}^{\infty} = \frac{1}{|\vec{r}_N - \vec{r}_i|}$$

where θ_i is the angle between $\vec{r} - \vec{r}_i$ and \vec{r} .

$$W_N = q_N \cdot \left(\sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_N \cdot q_i}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{r}_N - \vec{r}_i|} - \sum_j \left(\sum_{k \neq j} \frac{Q_j \cdot Q_k}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}_N) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r}_N)|} + \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{q_i \cdot Q_j}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}_N) - \vec{r}_i|} + \sum_{k \neq j} U_{jk}(\vec{R}_j(\vec{r}_N) - \vec{R}_k(\vec{r}_N)) \right) \right)$$