

Cross Sections of 3D Figures

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____ / 24

Q Quick Review

A **cross section** is the flat, two-dimensional shape you see when you slice straight through a solid. The shape depends on *what* you slice and *which way*. A **horizontal** slice (parallel to the base) usually matches the base: slicing a cylinder gives a *circle*, slicing a rectangular prism gives a *rectangle*. A **vertical** slice can give a different shape: a vertical cut through a cylinder gives a *rectangle*, and a vertical cut through a cone (through the tip) gives a *triangle*. Picture the knife and follow the edges it crosses.

◇ **Example:** What shape is formed by a horizontal cross section of a cylinder?

⇒ Picture a soup can standing upright. A horizontal slice is parallel to the circular top and bottom. As the knife passes through, it traces the same round shape as the base all the way across. So a horizontal cross section of a cylinder is a *circle* — the same size as the base.

Answer: a circle

PRACTICE

Name the cross-section shape for each slice.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Horizontal slice of a cylinder _____ | 12. Vertical slice of a triangular prism (parallel to base) _____ |
| 2. Vertical slice of a cylinder (through the center) _____ | 13. Slice of a cylinder at a slight angle _____ |
| 3. Horizontal slice of a rectangular prism _____ | 14. Horizontal slice of a hexagonal prism _____ |
| 4. Vertical slice of a rectangular prism _____ | 15. Cross section that matches a solid's base is from a _____ slice |
| 5. Horizontal slice of a cube _____ | 16. Vertical slice of a cube _____ |
| 6. Horizontal slice of a cone _____ | 17. Horizontal slice of a sphere through the center _____ |
| 7. Vertical slice of a cone through the tip _____ | 18. Vertical slice of a cone NOT through the tip _____ |
| 8. Any slice of a sphere _____ | 19. Slice of a rectangular prism parallel to a face _____ |
| 9. Horizontal slice of a square pyramid _____ | 20. Horizontal slice of a pentagonal pyramid _____ |
| 10. Vertical slice of a square pyramid through the tip _____ | |
| 11. Horizontal slice of a triangular prism _____ | |

◆ Word Problems

21. A baker slices a cylindrical cake straight down through the center, from top to bottom. What two-dimensional shape is the freshly cut face? _____
22. An architect slices a model of a square-based pyramid horizontally, partway up. What shape is the cross section, and how does its size compare to the base? _____
23. A geologist cuts a spherical rock sample with a flat saw. No matter where the cut is made, what shape will every cross section be? _____
24. A chef cuts an ice cream cone straight down through its pointed tip. What shape is the cross section? _____



Answer Keys

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|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. circle | 13. ellipse |
| 2. rectangle | 14. hexagon |
| 3. rectangle | 15. horizontal |
| 4. rectangle | 16. square |
| 5. square | 17. circle |
| 6. circle | 18. not a triangle |
| 7. triangle | 19. rectangle |
| 8. circle | 20. pentagon |
| 9. square | 21. a rectangle |
| 10. triangle | 22. a square, smaller than the base |
| 11. triangle | 23. a circle |
| 12. rectangle | 24. a triangle |

Step-by-Step Explanations

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. A horizontal slice matches the round base.</p> <p>2. A vertical cut through a cylinder gives a rectangle.</p> <p>3. A horizontal slice matches the rectangular base.</p> <p>4. A straight vertical cut still gives a rectangle.</p> <p>5. A cube's horizontal slice matches the square base.</p> <p>6. A horizontal slice of a cone gives a (smaller) circle.</p> <p>7. Cutting straight down through the apex gives a triangle.</p> <p>8. Every flat slice of a sphere is a circle.</p> <p>9. A horizontal slice matches the square base shape.</p> <p>10. Cutting down through the apex gives a triangle.</p> <p>11. A horizontal slice matches the triangular base.</p> <p>12. Cutting parallel to the rectangular side gives a rectangle.</p> <p>13. An angled (non-horizontal, non-vertical) cut gives an ellipse.</p> <p>14. A horizontal slice matches the hexagonal base.</p> | <p>15. A horizontal slice is parallel to and matches the base.</p> <p>16. A vertical cut through a cube gives a square (or rectangle) face.</p> <p>17. The widest slice of a sphere is its great-circle circle.</p> <p>18. Missing the apex, the cut is a curved shape, not a triangle.</p> <p>19. Any cut parallel to a face copies that rectangular face.</p> <p>20. A horizontal slice of a pentagonal pyramid is a pentagon.</p> <p>21. A vertical slice through the center of a cylinder cuts through the straight sides and flat top and bottom, producing a rectangle.</p> <p>22. A horizontal slice of a square pyramid is a square shaped like the base, but smaller because the pyramid narrows toward the top.</p> <p>23. Every flat slice of a sphere produces a circle; slices closer to the center make larger circles.</p> <p>24. A vertical slice through the apex of a cone passes through the tip and across the circular base, forming a triangle.</p> |
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