

electric current from the power station and the third is earthed by connecting it to the buried metal plate. Metallic bodies of the electric appliances such as electric iron, refrigerator, TV are connected to the earth wire. When any fault occurs or live wire touches the metallic body, the charge flows to the earth without damaging the appliance and without causing any injury to the humans; this would have otherwise been unavoidable since the human body is a conductor of electricity.

use of earthing

### 1.4 CHARGING BY INDUCTION

When we touch a pith ball with an electrified plastic rod, some of the negative charges on the rod are transferred to the pith ball and it also gets charged. Thus the pith ball is charged by contact. It is then repelled by the plastic rod but is attracted by a glass rod which is oppositely charged. However, why a electrified rod attracts light objects, is a question we have still left unanswered. Let us try to understand what could be happening by performing the following experiment.

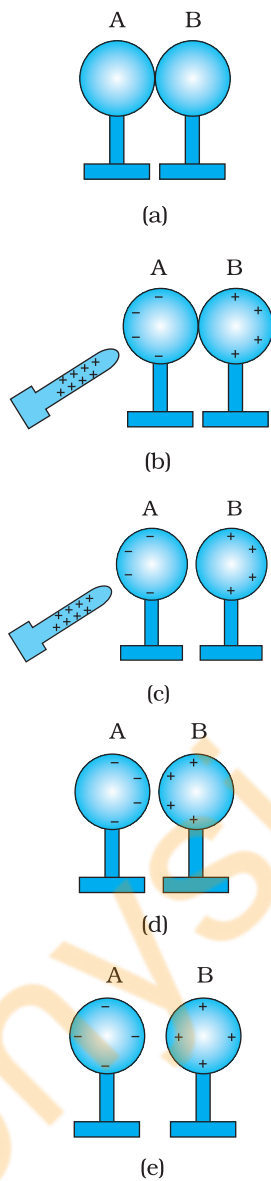


FIGURE 1.4 Charging by induction.

(i) Bring two metal spheres, A and B, supported on insulating stands, in contact as shown in Fig. 1.4(a).

(ii) Bring a positively charged rod near one of the spheres, say A, taking care that it does not touch the sphere. The free electrons in the spheres are attracted towards the rod. This leaves an excess of positive charge on the rear surface of sphere B. Both kinds of charges are bound in the metal spheres and cannot escape. They, therefore, reside on the surfaces, as shown in Fig. 1.4(b). The left surface of sphere A, has an excess of negative charge and the right surface of sphere B, has an excess of positive charge. However, not all of the electrons in the spheres have accumulated on the left surface of A. As the negative charge starts building up at the left surface of A, other electrons are repelled by these. In a short time, equilibrium is reached under the action of force of attraction of the rod and the force of repulsion due to the accumulated charges. Fig. 1.4(b) shows the equilibrium situation. The process is called *induction of charge* and happens almost instantly. The accumulated charges remain on the surface, as shown, till the glass rod is held near the sphere. If the rod is removed, the charges are not acted by any outside force and they redistribute to their original neutral state.

(iii) Separate the spheres by a small distance while the glass rod is still held near sphere A, as shown in Fig. 1.4(c). The two spheres are found to be oppositely charged and attract each other.

(iv) Remove the rod. The charges on spheres rearrange themselves as shown in Fig. 1.4(d). Now, separate the spheres quite apart. The charges on them get uniformly distributed over them, as shown in Fig. 1.4(e).

In this process, the metal spheres will each be equal and oppositely charged. This is *charging by induction*. The positively charged glass rod does not lose any of its charge, contrary to the process of charging by contact.

electrically neutral

When electrified rods are brought near light objects, a similar effect takes place. The rods induce opposite charges on the near surfaces of the objects and similar charges move to the farther side of the object.