

Year 6: Physics: Electricity: How can I make an ambulance's lights brighter and sirens louder?

Subject Specific Vocabulary

Sticky Knowledge

Key Vocabulary	Definition
cell/battery	A device that stores chemical energy until it is needed. A cell is a single unit. A battery is a collection of cells.
current	The flow of electrons.
electrons	Very small particles that travel around an electrical circuit.
resistance	The difficulty that the electric current has when flowing around the circuit.
voltage	The force that makes the electric current move through the wires. The greater the voltage, the more current will flow.



A series circuit is a circuit that has only one route for the electrical *current* to take. If just one part of this series circuit breaks, the circuit is broken and the flow of *current* stops.

Turning a switch off (open) breaks a circuit so the circuit is not complete and electricity cannot flow. Any bulbs, motors or buzzers will then turn off as well. The *components* of a *circuit* have recognised circuit *symbols* which can be used to draw simple circuit *diagrams*.



What will make a bulb brighter or a buzzer louder?

- Adding more *cells*, or a *cell* with a higher *voltage*, creates more power to flow through the circuit.
- Shortening the wires means the *electrons* have less *resistance* to flow through.

Both of these actions would make a bulb brighter, a motor spin faster or a buzzer make a louder sound.

What will make a bulb dimmer or a buzzer quieter?

- Fewer batteries or a lower voltage give less power to the circuit.
- More buzzers or bulbs mean the power is shared by more *components*.
- Lengthening the wires means the *electrons* have to travel through more *resistance*.

All of these things would lead to dimmer bulbs, a slower motor and a quieter buzzer.