

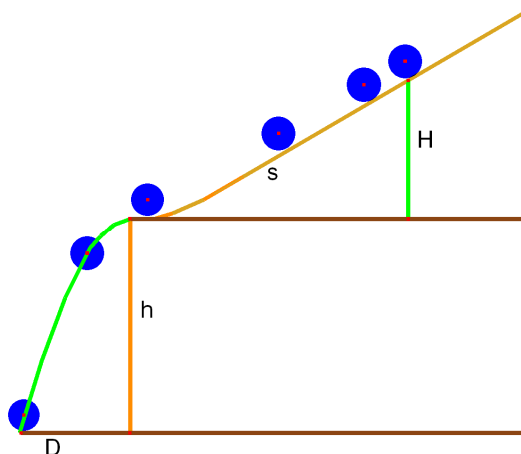


The Gravitational Calculator, a Galilean exhibit, ScienzaViva, Calitri (Italy)

Our exhibit takes advantage of at least four Galilean laws:

1.  $v \sim \sqrt{s}$
2. **the law of inertia** along a horizontal plane<sup>1</sup>;
3.  $t \sim \sqrt{h}$  which is the inverse of the most common formula  $h \sim t^2$ , that the distances traveled by a falling body depend on the square of the time (in modern science, we use equivalently  $t \sim \sqrt{h}$  or  $v \sim \sqrt{s}$  to write the law of falling bodies, but this equivalence was not a easy matter for Galileo, as it will shown in a short while);
4.  $D = v \cdot t$ , because the horizontal component motion during the flight is considered an uniform motion.

$$D = \sqrt{(D_0^2 s / s_0)}$$



<sup>1</sup> « The continuity of the motion at uniform speed in a straight line finished to become the cornerstone of Newtonian physics. That motion is now said 'inertial': Galileo admitted it only for the bodies in motion for relatively short distances close to the surface of the earth. In fact, in his Physics a body must gain velocity when approaching the center or lose it while moving away: if it falls or rises, what little as it is» ( Drake 1998, pp. 54-55).