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The Mechatronics Handbook



FIGURE 20.9 Assorts of solenoid actuators. (Courtesy of Shih Hsing Industrial Co., Ltd.)

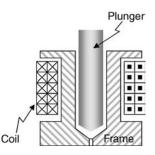


FIGURE 20.10 A typical solenoid.

Solenoid Type Devices

Solenoids, see Fig. 20.9, is the simplest electromagnetic actuators that are used in linear as well as rotary actuations for valves, switches, and relays. As the name indicates, a solenoid consists of a stationary iron frame (stator), a coil (solenoid), and a ferromagnetic plunger (armature) in the center of the coil, see Fig. 20.10.

As the coil is energized, a magnetic field is induced inside the coil. The movable plunger moves to increase the flux linkage by closing the air gap between the plunger and the stationary frame. The magnetic force generated is approximately proportional to the square of the applied current *i* and is inverse proportional to the square of the air gap δ , which is the stroke of the solenoid, i.e.,

$$F \propto \frac{t^2}{\delta^2} \tag{20.9}$$

As shown in Fig. 20.11, for strokes less than 0.060 in., the flat face plunger is recommended with a pull or push force three to five times greater than 60° plungers. For longer strokes up to 0.750 in., the 60° plunger offers the greatest advantage over the flat face plunger. When the coil is de-energized, the field decreases and the plunger will return to the original location either by the load itself or through a return spring.

All linear solenoids basically pull the plunger into the coil when energized. Push-type solenoids are implemented by extending the plunger through a hole in the back-stop, see Fig. 20.12. Therefore, when energized, the plunger is still pulled into the coil, but the extended producing a pushing motion from the back end of the solenoid. Return motion, upon de-energizing the coil, is provided by the load itself (i.e., the weight of the load) and/or by a return spring, which can be provided as an integral part of the solenoid assembly.

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