

16. Since according to the problem statement there is a point in between the two charges on the x axis where the net electric field is zero, the fields at that point due to q_1 and q_2 must be directed opposite to each other. This means that q_1 and q_2 must have the same sign (i.e., either both are positive or both negative). Thus, the potentials due to either of them must be of the same sign. Therefore, the net electric potential cannot possibly be zero anywhere except at infinity.