

Q-switched laser

A *laser* in which the state of the device introducing important losses in the resonant cavity and preventing lasing operation is suddenly switched to a state where the device introduces very low losses. This increases rapidly the Quality factor of the cavity, allowing the build-up of a short and very intense laser pulse. Typical pulse durations are in the ns range. The Q-switching may be active (a rotating mirror or electro-optic device) or passive (a saturable absorber).

See also *free-running laser*.

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