



Topic #2: The Chemical Alphabet Fall 2020

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See Exercises 11.1 to 11.4





Forms of Carbon



The Group 15 Elements

Nitrogen 14.0067 N Phosphorus 30 9738 P 15 Arsenic 74 9216 As 33 Antimony 121.757 Sb 51 Bismuth 208,980 Bi 83

What do we know about the Group 15 elements?

- *N* is diatomic; *P*, *As* and *Sb* have multiple allotropes
- Nonmetal (*N*, *P*), metalloid (*As*, *Sb*) or metal (*Bi*)
- They form one monoatomic anion (-3)
- Sb^{3+} and Bi^{3+} also exist
- They have five valence electrons (valence electron configuration [N.G.]ns²np³) and positive electron affinities

	Melting Point	Boiling Point	State	Density
			(at 20 °C)	(at 20 °C)
Nitrogen	-210 °C	-196 °C	Gas	0.00125 g/cm ³
Phosphorus (white)	44 °C	280.5 °C	Solid	2.2 g/cm ³
Arsenic (grey)	817 °C*	616 °C*	Solid	5.78 g/cm ³
Antimony (grey)	631 °C	1635 °C	Solid	6.69 g/cm ³
Bismuth	271 °C	1580 °C	Solid	9.75 g/cm ³





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Nitrogen is a very stable diatomic molecule (N_2) .

- The triple bond holding the two atoms together is very strong, so
 N₂ is a very unreactive gas.
- Nitrogen is often used as an inert atmosphere for chemical reactions and for production of electronic components. Being the major component of air, it is much cheaper than the most common alternative, argon. (Air is 78% N₂, 21% O₂ and 1% Ar with traces of many other gases.)
- As we saw earlier in the course, nitrogen will react spontaneously with lithium and with the alkaline earth metals:

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The reaction between nitrogen and hydrogen is exothermic, but the activation energy is high, so it will not proceed without some sort of catalyst. Why?

- Nitrogen is an essential element for all organisms, but most cannot use elemental nitrogen (N₂), instead requiring nitrogen that has been "fixed" in some way (as a nitrate, an ammonium salt or as part of a biological molecule).
- Some microorganisms can "fix" nitrogen by making NH_3 from N_2 , H^+ and e^- .

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- The most important method for producing ammonia (NH_3) industrially is the Haber-Bosch process.
 - Nitrogen and hydrogen are reacted in the presence of catalyst at a high temperature (400 °C) and high pressure (~200 bar):

 The reaction is forced to continue in a forward direction by removing ammonia as it is produced by cooling it to a liquid.
 *NH*₃ condenses at a much higher temperature than N₂ or H₂.
 Why?

• The unreacted nitrogen and hydrogen are recycled back into the reaction chamber, allowing for almost 100% yield of *NH*₃ over time.







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Ammonia is a weak base. When it dissolves in water, some of the ammonia reacts with the water:

For this reason, aqueous ammonia (NH_{3(aq)}) is often referred to as ammonium hydroxide (NH₄OH_(aq)). Since this equilibrium is reactant-favoured, NH_{3(aq)} is more descriptive of the solution.



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Ammonia reacts completely with strong acids. It should be kept well away from nitric acid as the product of that reaction is highly explosive! What is this product? Write a balanced equation for the reaction between ammonia and nitric acid.

 Many other explosive compounds contain nitrogen because N₂ is a gas containing very strong bonds so reactions producing it tend to release a lot of energy. e.g. azides (N₃⁻ salts), TNT

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There are two major allotropes of phosphorus:

- White phosphorus (P₄) is soft and waxy and so reactive with air that it is stored under water. It can ignite spontaneously in air
- Red phosphorus (P, a **network solid**) is formed when white phosphorus is heated to 200 - 400 °C away from air.
- Black phosphorus and violet phosphorus also exist. They are both network solids.



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(a) White phosphorus

(b) Black phosphorus

(c) Red phosphorus

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As we saw in the Halogens section, phosphorus reacts with halogens to make PX_3 or PX_5 (depends on amount of halogen).

Solid white phosphorus + gaseous chlorine -----> liquid phosphorus trichloride



It isn't surprising that P₄ is so reactive given its structure.
 Compare the bond angles in P₄ to the ideal bond angles for an atom with a steric number of 4 (three bonds plus one lone pair).

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- Phosphorus forms strong bonds with oxygen, and there are several phosphorus oxides, phosphates, phosphites and phosphoric acids.
- We saw that the sulfur oxides were acidic. This can be generalized to all nonmetal oxides. The two main oxides of phosphorus are P_4O_6 and P_4O_{10} . What is formed when each reacts with water?

Do you remember what was unusual about phosphorous acid?

Nitrogen 14.0067

N

Phosphorus

30.9738 P

74 9216 As 33 Antimony 121.757 Sb 51 Bismuth 208,980 Bi

15 Arsenic

83

Phosphoric acid is unusual among the oxoacids in that it has a tendency to polymerize.

- H_3PO_4 can also be called "orthophosphoric acid"
- When two molecules of H_3PO_4 combine, they make "diphosphoric acid" (or "pyrophosphoric acid") and a molecule of water:

• If a third molecule of H_3PO_4 is added to the chain, "triphosphoric acid" is produced:

Two very important biological molecules (ATP and ADP) contain derivatives of these polymerized phosphoric acids.