



CHEMISTRY

Target : JEE (Main)

CHEMICAL EQUILIBRIUM

Chemical Equilibrium

Introduction :

Equilibrium is a state in which there are no observable changes as time goes by. When a chemical reaction has reached the equilibrium state, the concentrations of reactants and products remain constant over time and there are no visible changes in the system. However, there is much activity at the molecular level because reactant molecules continue to form product molecules while product molecules react to yield reactant molecules. This dynamic situation is the subject of this chapter. Here we will discuss different types of equilibrium reactions, the meaning of the equilibrium constant and its relationship to the rate constant and factors that can disrupt a system at equilibrium.

Types of chemical reactions

IRREVERSIBLE REACTION

The reaction which proceed in one direction only

(a) Precipitation reactions e.g.
 $\text{NaCl (aq)} + \text{AgNO}_3\text{(aq)} \rightarrow \text{NaNO}_3\text{(aq)} + \text{AgCl}\downarrow$

(b) Neutralization reactions e.g.
 $\text{HCl (aq)} + \text{NaOH(aq)} \rightarrow \text{NaCl(s)} + \text{H}_2\text{O}$

(c) Reactions in open vessels with one of the gaseous product

REVERSIBLE REACTION

Reactions which proceed in both the direction. These are possible only in closed vessel e.g.

(a) $\text{N}_2\text{(g)} + \text{O}_2\text{(g)} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{NO(g)}$

(b) $\text{PCl}_5\text{(g)} \rightleftharpoons \text{PCl}_3\text{(g)} + \text{Cl}_2\text{(g)}$

Types of chemical reactions

Irreversible reaction		Reversible reaction	
1	The reaction which proceeds in one direction (forward direction) only.	1	The reaction which proceed in both the direction under the same set of experimental conditions.
2	Reactants are almost completely converted into products. Products do not react to form reactants again.	2	Reactants form products and products also react to form reactants in backward direction. These are possible in closed vessels .
3	Do not attain equilibrium state.	3	Attain the equilibrium state and never go to completion.
4	Such reactions are represented by single arrow {→}	4	Represented by double arrow (\rightleftharpoons) or (\rightleftharpoons)
5	Examples –	5	Examples :-
(a)	Precipitation reactions e.g. $\text{NaCl(aq)} + \text{AgNO}_3\text{(aq)} \rightarrow \text{NaNO}_3\text{(aq)} + \text{AgCl}\downarrow$	(a)	Homogeneous reactions- only one phase is present
(b)	Neutralization reactions e.g. $\text{HCl(aq)} + \text{NaOH(aq)} \rightarrow \text{NaCl(aq)} + \text{H}_2\text{O}$	(i)	Gaseous phase–
(c)	$2\text{KClO}_3\text{(s)} \xrightarrow{\Delta} 2\text{KCl(s)} + 3\text{O}_2\text{(g)}$		$\text{H}_2\text{(g)} + \text{I}_2\text{(g)} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{HI(g)}$
(d)	Reactions in open vessel :- Even a reversible reaction will become irreversible if it is carried out in open vessel. Ex. $\text{CaCO}_3\text{(s)} \rightleftharpoons \text{CaO(s)} + \text{CO}_2\text{(g)}$		$\text{N}_2\text{(g)} + \text{O}_2\text{(g)} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{NO(g)}$ [Birkland eyde process (HNO ₃)]
	$\text{NH}_4\text{HS(s)} \rightleftharpoons \text{NH}_3\text{(g)} + \text{H}_2\text{S(g)}$ Open vessel		$\text{N}_2\text{(g)} + 3\text{H}_2\text{(g)} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{NH}_3\text{(g)}$ (Haber's process)
		(ii)	Liquid phase
			$\text{CH}_3\text{COOH(l)} + \text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{OH(l)} \rightleftharpoons \text{CH}_3\text{COOC}_2\text{H}_5\text{(l)} + \text{H}_2\text{O(l)}$
			Heterogeneous reactions– More than one phases are present
			$\text{CaCO}_3\text{(s)} \rightleftharpoons \text{CaO(s)} + \text{CO}_2\text{(g)}$
		(b)	$\text{NH}_4\text{HS(s)} \rightleftharpoons \text{NH}_3\text{(g)} + \text{H}_2\text{S(g)}$ Closed vessel

State of Chemical equilibrium :

State of equilibrium means the balance of driving forces i.e. the factors taking the reaction in forward direction and the backward direction are balancing each other.

The equilibrium state represents a compromise between two opposing tendencies.

- Molecules try to minimise energy.
- Molecules try to maximise entropy.

In a reversible reaction like–

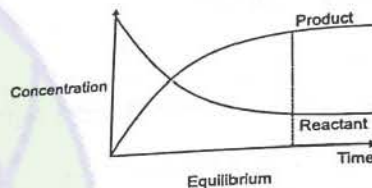
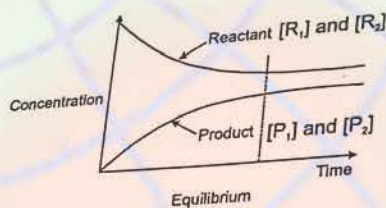
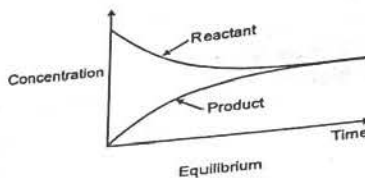
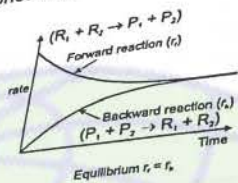


Chemical Equilibrium

Initially only reactants are present. R_1 and R_2 combine to form P_1 and P_2 . As soon as P_1 and P_2 are formed, they start the backward reaction. As concentrations of R_1 and R_2 decrease rate of forward reaction decreases and rate of backward reaction increases. Ultimately a stage is reached when both the rates become equal. Such a state is known as "Chemical Equilibrium" or "state of Equilibrium".

At equilibrium :

- (i) Rate of forward reaction (r_f) = rate of backward reaction (r_b)
- (ii) Concentration (mole/litre) of reactant and product remains constant with respect to time.



Types of equilibria on the basis of process

Physical Equilibrium
Equilibrium in physical process is called physical equilibrium.
For example
phase changes like $H_2O(l) \rightleftharpoons H_2O(g)$;
Solvation like $NaCl(s) \xrightleftharpoons[\text{excess}]{H_2O} NaCl(aq)$

Chemical Equilibrium
Equilibrium in chemical process is called chemical equilibrium.
For example
 $H_2(g) + Cl_2(g) \rightleftharpoons 2HCl(g)$

Types of equilibria on basis of physical state

Homogeneous equilibrium
When all reactants and products are in same phase
 $H_2(g) + Cl_2(g) \rightleftharpoons 2HCl(g)$
 $SO_2(g) + NO_2(g) \rightleftharpoons SO_3(g) + NO(g)$

Heterogeneous equilibrium
When more than one phase are present
 $3Fe(s) + 4H_2O(g) \rightleftharpoons Fe_3O_4(s) + 4H_2(g)$
 $2Na_2O_2(s) + 2H_2O(l) \rightleftharpoons 4NaOH + O_2(g)$

Chemical Equilibrium

Solved Examples

Ex.2 Four vessel each of volume $V = 10$ Litres contains
 (1) 16 g CH_4 (2) 18 g H_2O (3) 35.5 g Cl_2 (4) 44 g CO_2
 Which container will contain same molar concentration and same active mass as that in (1)?

Sol. (1) $\Rightarrow [\text{CH}_4] = \frac{16}{16 \times 10} = 0.1 \text{ M}$

(2) $\Rightarrow [\text{H}_2\text{O}] = \frac{18}{18 \times 10} = 0.1 \text{ M}$

(3) $\Rightarrow [\text{Cl}_2] = \frac{35.5}{71 \times 10} = 0.05 \text{ M}$

(4) $\Rightarrow [\text{CO}_2] = \frac{44}{44 \times 10} = 0.1 \text{ M}$

Hence, (2) and (4) has same molar concentration as that in (1).

Equilibrium constant (K):

For a general reaction



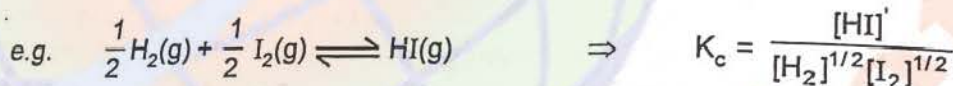
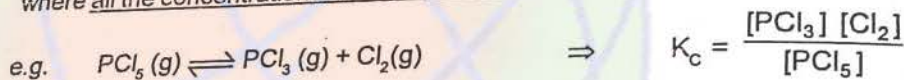
Forward reaction rate $r_f = k_f [A]^a [B]^b$,
 Backward reaction rate $r_b = k_b [C]^c [D]^d$,

At equilibrium $r_f = r_b$
 $k_f [A]^a [B]^b = k_b [C]^c [D]^d$

The concentrations of reactants & products at equilibrium are related by

$$\frac{K_f}{K_b} = K_c = \frac{[C]^c [D]^d}{[A]^a [B]^b}$$

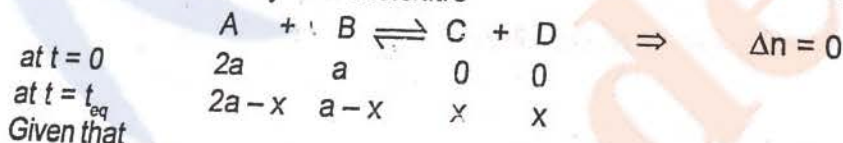
K_c is a constant and is called the **equilibrium constant in terms of concentration**, where all the concentrations are at equilibrium and are expressed in moles/litre.



Solved Examples

Ex.3 In a reaction $A(\text{g}) + B(\text{g}) \rightleftharpoons C(\text{g}) + D(\text{g})$, A, B, are mixed in a vessel at temperature T. The initial concentration of A was twice the initial concentration of B. After the equilibrium is reached, concentration of C was thrice the concentration of B. Calculate K_c .

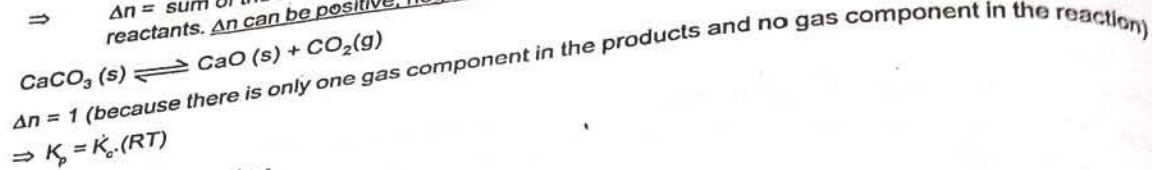
Sol. Let concentration of B initially is 'a' mole/litre



$x = 3(a - x) \Rightarrow x = \frac{3}{4}a$ $K_c = \frac{[C][D]}{[A][B]}$

$K_c = \frac{x \cdot x}{(2a - x)(a - x)} \Rightarrow K_c = \frac{\left(\frac{3a}{4}\right)^2}{\left(2a - \frac{3a}{4}\right)\left(a - \frac{3a}{4}\right)} \Rightarrow K_c = \frac{9}{5} = 1.8$

When $\Delta n = (c + d) - (a + b)$, calculate $\Delta n =$ sum of the number of moles of gaseous products - sum of the number of moles of gaseous reactants. Δn can be positive, negative, zero or even fraction.

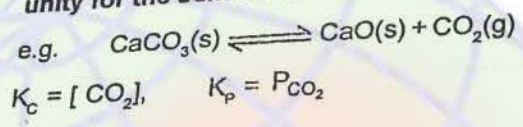


Unit of Equilibrium constants :

- Unit of K_p is $(\text{atm})^{\Delta n}$
- Unit of K_c is $(\text{mole/Lit})^{\Delta n} = (\text{conc.})^{\Delta n}$

Note: ○ In fact, equilibrium constant does not carry any unit because it is based upon the activities of reactants and products and activities are unitless quantities. Under ordinary circumstances, where activities are not known, above types of equilibrium constant and their units are employed.

○ For pure solids and pure liquids, although they have their own active masses but they remain constant during a chemical change (reaction). Therefore, these are taken to be unity for the sake of convenience.



Solved Examples

Ex.5 Calculate k_p and K_c if initially a moles of PCl_5 is taken
 $\text{PCl}_5(g) \rightleftharpoons \text{PCl}_3(g) + \text{Cl}_2(g)$

Sol.

		$\text{PCl}_5(g)$	\rightleftharpoons	$\text{PCl}_3(g)$	+	$\text{Cl}_2(g)$
At	$t = 0$	a		0		0
At	$t = t_{\text{eq}}$	$(a - x)$		x		x

$[\text{PCl}_5] = \frac{a-x}{V}, \quad [\text{PCl}_3] = \frac{x}{V}, \quad [\text{Cl}_2] = \frac{x}{V}$

$K_c = \frac{\left(\frac{x}{V}\right)^2}{\left(\frac{a-x}{V}\right)}$

Total no. of moles = $a - x + x + x = a + x$

$[P_{\text{PCl}_5}] = \frac{(a-x)P}{a+x}, \quad [P_{\text{PCl}_3}] = \frac{x \cdot P}{a+x}, \quad [P_{\text{Cl}_2}] = \frac{x \cdot P}{a+x}$

$K_p = \frac{\left(\frac{xP}{a+x}\right) \cdot \left(\frac{xP}{a+x}\right)}{\left(\frac{a-xP}{a+x}\right)} = \frac{x^2P}{a^2 - x^2}$

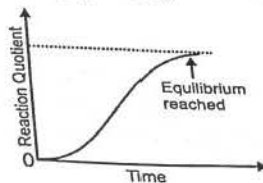
Applications of Equilibrium constant :

Predicting the direction of the reaction
Reaction Quotient (Q)

At each point in a reaction, we can write a ratio of concentration terms having the same form as the equilibrium constant expression. This ratio is called the reaction quotient denoted by symbol Q. It helps in predicting the direction of a reaction.

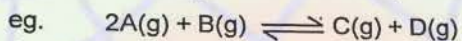
The expression $Q = \frac{[C]^c [D]^d}{[A]^a [B]^b}$ at any time during reaction

is called reaction quotient. The concentrations [C], [D], [A], [B] are not necessarily at equilibrium.



- The reaction quotient is a variable quantity with time.
- It helps in predicting the direction of a reaction.

- if $Q > K_c$ reaction will proceed in backward direction until equilibrium is reached.
- if $Q < K_c$ reaction will proceed in forward direction until equilibrium is established.
- if $Q = K_c$ Reaction is at equilibrium.



Q_c = Reaction quotient in terms of concentration

$$Q_c = \frac{[C][D]}{[A]^2[B]}$$

$$K_c = \frac{[C]_{eq}[D]_{eq}}{[A]_{eq}^2[B]_{eq}} \text{ [Here all the conc. are at equilibrium]}$$

Solved Examples

Ex.6 For the reaction $NOBr(g) \rightleftharpoons NO(g) + \frac{1}{2} Br_2(g)$
 $K_p = 0.15$ atm at $90^\circ C$. If $NOBr$, NO and Br_2 are mixed at this temperature having partial pressures 0.5 atm, 0.4 atm and 0.2 atm respectively, will Br_2 be consumed or formed ?

Sol. $Q_p = \frac{[P_{Br_2}]^{1/2} [P_{NO}]}{[P_{NOBr}]} = \frac{[0.2]^{1/2} [0.4]}{[0.5]} = 0.36$

$K_p = 0.15$

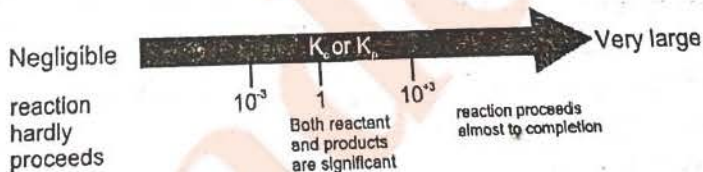
$\therefore Q_p > K_p$

Hence, reaction will shift in backward direction

$\therefore Br_2$ will be consumed

Predicting the extent of the reaction

$$K = \frac{[Product]}{[Reactant]}$$



Case-I : If K is large ($K > 10^3$) then product concentration is very very larger than the reactant ($[Product] \gg [Reactant]$)
 Hence concentration of reactant can be neglected with respect to the product. In this case, the reaction is product favourable and equilibrium will be more in forward direction than in backward direction.

Case-II : If K is very small ($K < 10^{-3}$)

$[Product] \ll [Reactant]$

Hence concentration of Product can be neglected as compared to the reactant.
 In this case, the reaction is reactant favourable.

Chemical Equilibrium

Solved Examples

Ex.7 The K_p values for three reactions are 10^{-6} , 20 and 300 then what will be the correct order of the percentage composition of the products.

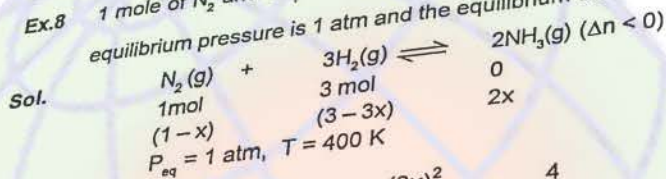
Sol. Since K_p order is $10^{-6} < 20 < 300$ so the percentage composition of products will be greatest for $K_p = 300$.

Calculating equilibrium concentrations

The concentration of various reactants and products can be calculated using the equilibrium constant and the initial concentrations.

Solved Examples

Ex.8 1 mole of N_2 and 3 moles of H_2 are placed in 1L vessel. Find the concentration of NH_3 at equilibrium, if equilibrium pressure is 1 atm and the equilibrium constant at 400K is $\frac{4}{27}$



$$K_c = \frac{[NH_3]^2}{[N_2][H_2]^3} = \frac{(2x)^2}{(3-3x)^3(1-x)} = \frac{4}{27}$$

$$\frac{x^2}{(1-x)^4} = 1 \Rightarrow x = (1-x)^2$$

$$\Rightarrow x = \frac{3 \pm \sqrt{9-4}}{2} \Rightarrow x = \frac{3 \pm \sqrt{5}}{2}$$

$$x = \frac{3+2.24}{2} \text{ or } x = \frac{3-2.24}{2}$$

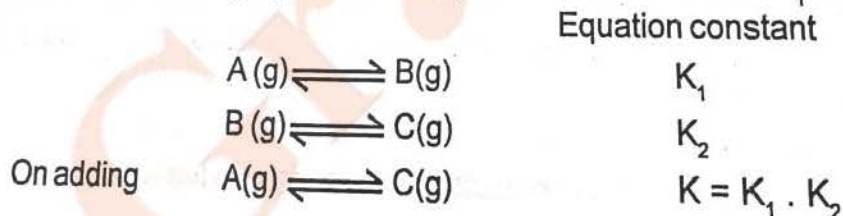
$$x = \frac{5.24}{2} = 2.62 \text{ or } x = \frac{0.76}{2}$$

$\Rightarrow x = 0.38$ (since x cannot be greater than 1)

$$\therefore [NH_3] = 0.38 \times 2 = 0.76$$

Characteristics of equilibrium constant & factors affecting it :

- Equilibrium constant does not depend upon concentration of various reactants, presence of catalyst, direction from which equilibrium is reached
- The equilibrium constant does not give any idea about time taken to attain equilibrium.
- **K depends on the stoichiometry of the reaction.**
 - If two chemical reactions at equilibrium having equilibrium constants K_1 and K_2 are added then the resulting equation has equilibrium constant $K = K_1 \cdot K_2$



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