

5.6: Nomenclature- Naming Compounds

Nomenclature is the process of naming chemical compounds so that they can be easily identified as separate chemicals. The primary function of chemical nomenclature is to ensure that a spoken or written chemical name leaves no ambiguity concerning which chemical compound the name refers to—each chemical name should refer to a single substance. A less important aim is to ensure that each substance has a single name, although a limited number of alternative names is acceptable in some cases. Preferably, the name also conveys some information about the structure or chemistry of a compound. A common name will often suffice to identify a chemical compound in a particular set of circumstances. To be more generally applicable, the name should indicate at least the chemical formula. To be more specific still, the three-dimensional arrangement of the atoms may need to be specified.

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