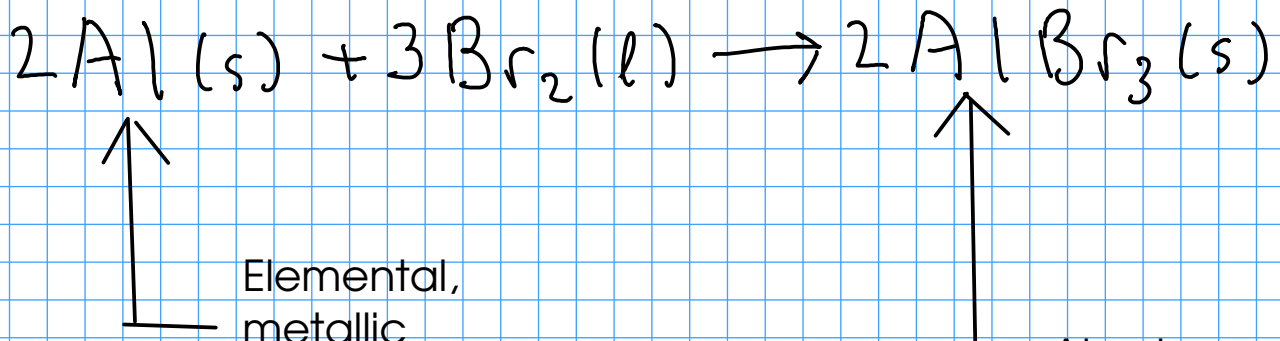
OXIDATION / REDUCTION CHEMISTRY

- Exchange reactions involve ions pairing up, but the ions themseves are not formed in exchange reactions. Exchanges start with pre-existing ions.

... but the ions have to be produced somehow - through a chemistry that involves the transfer of electrons.

- oxidation / reduction chemistry ("redox" chemistry) involves transfer of electrons and can make ions.



These are called "half-reactions"

$Al \rightarrow Al^{3+} + 3e^-$

electron

oxidation: loss of electrons

$Br_2 + 2e^- \rightarrow 2Br^-$

reduction: gain of electrons

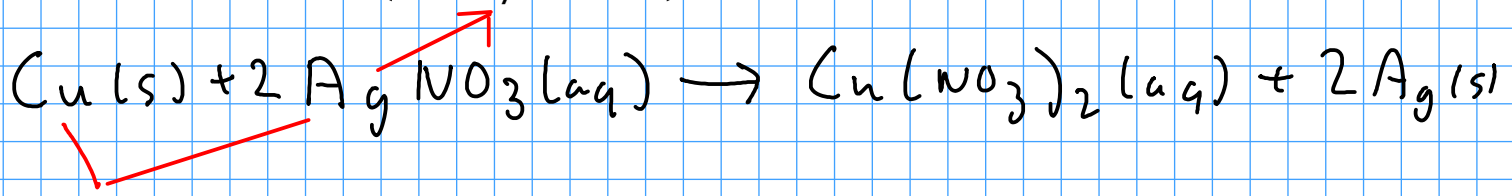
- oxidation and reduction always occur together. In other words, we can't just make free electrons using oxidation without giving them somewhere to go.

- Many of the types of reactions that we learned about in previous courses are redox reactions!

  - COMBINATIONS (often but not always redox)

  - DECOMPOSITIONS (often redox)

  - SINGLE REPLACEMENT (always redox)



$Cu \rightarrow Cu^{2+} + 2e^-$ oxidation

$2Ag^+ + 2e^- \rightarrow 2Ag(s)$ reduction

net ionic → $Cu(s) + 2Ag^+(aq) \rightarrow Cu^{2+}(aq) + 2Ag(s)$

  - COMBUSTION

$2Mg(s) + O_2(g) \rightarrow 2MgO(s)$

$2Mg(s) \rightarrow 2Mg^{2+} + 4e^-$ oxidation

$O_2(g) + 4e^- \rightarrow 2O^{2-}$ reduction

A review of the reaction types we just mentioned:

COMBINATION REACTIONS

- Reactions that involve two or more simple substances COMBINING to form a SINGLE product

- Often involve large energy changes. Sometimes violent!

- Form: $A + B + \ldots \longrightarrow C$

Example:

$$2\,Al(s) + 3\,Br_2(l) \longrightarrow 2\,AlBr_3(s)$$

2 DECOMPOSITION REACTIONS

- Reactions where a SINGLE REACTANT breaks apart into several products

- Form: $A \longrightarrow B + C + \ldots$

Example:

$$2\,H_2O_2(\ell) \longrightarrow 2\,H_2O(\ell) + O_2(g)$$

* This reaction is NOT a combustion reaction, even though H_2O is involved!

* Combustion reactions CONSUME O_2, while this reaction PRODUCES O_2

3 COMBUSTION REACTIONS

- Reactions of substances with MOLECULAR OXYGEN (O_2) to form OXIDES.
- Combustion forms an OXIDE of EACH ELEMENT in the burned substance!

- Form: $AB + O_2 \longrightarrow AO + BO$

Oxide: a compound containing OXYGEN and one other element!

* Combustion of hydrocarbons makes carbon dioxide and water, if enough oxygen is present. In low-oxygen environments, carbon monoxide is made instead!

Examples:

Oxides!

$$C_3H_8(g) + 5O_2(g) \longrightarrow 4H_2O(g) + 3CO_2(g)$$

$$2Mg(s) + O_2(g) \longrightarrow 2MgO(s)$$

This reaction can also be called a combination!
Two reactants form a single product.

4 SINGLE REPLACEMENT REACTIONS

- Reactions where one element REPLACES another element in a compound.
- Can be predicted via an ACTIVITY SERIES (p151, 9th edition)
- Form: $A + BC \longrightarrow AC + B$ "A" and "B" are elements., often metals.
- Easy to spot, since there is an element "by itself" on each side of the equation.

Examples:

$$\overset{0}{Cu}(s) + 2\overset{+1}{Ag}NO_3(aq) \longrightarrow \overset{+2}{Cu}(NO_3)_2(aq) + 2\overset{0}{Ag}(s)$$

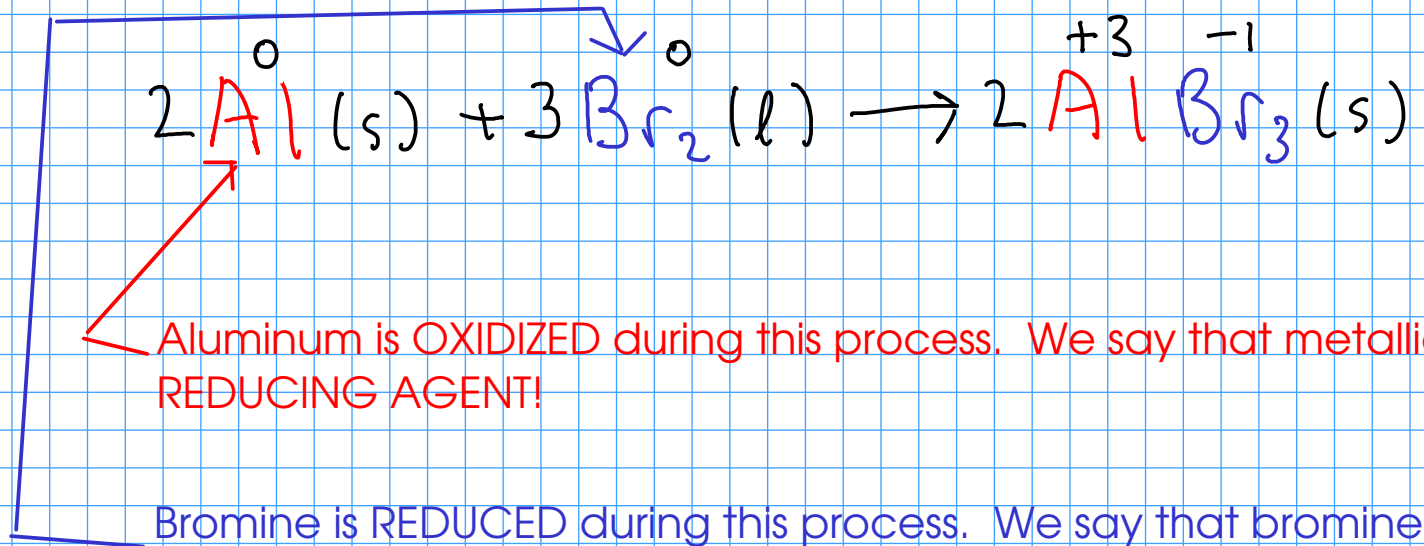
$$\overset{0}{Zn}(s) + \overset{+1}{H_2}SO_4(aq) \longrightarrow \overset{+2}{Zn}SO_4(aq) + \overset{0}{H_2}(g)$$

REDOX LANGUAGE

"oxidizer"

- "Oxidation" is loss of electrons, but an OXIDIZING AGENT is something that causes ANOTHER substance to lose electrons. An oxidizing agent is itself reduced during a redox reaction.

- "Reduction" is gain of electrons, but a REDUCING AGENT is something that causes ANOTHER substace to gain electrons. Reducing agents are themselves oxidized during a redox reaction.



* Strong oxidizers (oxidizing agents) can cause spontaneous fires if placed into contact with combustibles (safety issue!).

* Reactive metals tend to be REDUCING AGENTS, while oxygen-rich ions like NITRATES tend to be OXIDIZING AGENTS. HALOGENS (Group VIIA) also tend to be OXIDIZING AGENTS