



SINGLE REPLACEMENT REACTIONS

$$A + BC \longrightarrow AC + B$$

One element, usually a metal, replaces another element in a compound. This forms a new compound and leaves behind a new free element!

example:
$$(u(s) + 2 A_g NO_3(aq) \rightarrow (u(NO_3)_2(aq) + 2 A_g(s))$$

Copper loses electrons, goes from 0 charge to +2 charge!

Silver gains electrons, goes from +1 charge to 0 charge!

- ... but just because you combine an element and a compound doesn't mean that a reaction will occur. Some combinations react, some don't!
- Whether a reaction occurs depends on how easily the replacing and replaced elements lose electrons. An atom that loses electrons more easily will end up in IONIC form (in other words, in the compound). An atom that loses electrons less easily will end up as a free element.
- We say that an atom that loses electrons more easily that another is MORE ACTIVE than the other element. But how would you get information about ACTIVITY?

A single replacement reaction is an example of a reaction where ELECTRON TRANSFER is a driving force. Electron transfer reactions are generally called OXIDATION-REDUCTION reactions.

ACTIVITY SERIES

- comes from experiental data. It's a list of elements in order of their ACTIVITY - more active

elements are higher in the series!

A sample activity series

Sodium Nat Magnesium Mg²⁺

Aluminum Al3+

Zinc Zn2+
Iron Fe2+

Lead Pb2+

Very active metals will replace hydrogen in acids AND in water!

Metals more active than hydrogen will replace hydrogen in acids!

Hydrogen H⁺

Copper Cult

Silver Ag^t

Gold Itu3+

These metals are unreactive to most acids!