

BUFFERS

- resist pH change caused by either the addition of strong acid/base OR by dilution

Made in one of two ways:

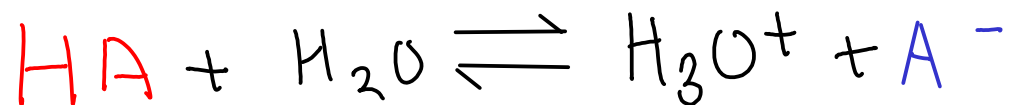
- ① Make a mixture of a weak acid and its conjugate base (as the SALT)
 $\text{HC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2$ $\text{NaC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2$
- ② Make a mixture of a weak base and its conjugate acid (as the SALT)
 NH_3 NH_4Cl

For a weak acid, you would:



- Add HA (weak acid)
- Add a salt containing A^- (example: NaA)

- This solution actually contains an acid and a base at equilibrium, with a significant concentration of BOTH.
- The acid in the buffer can neutralize bases, while the base can neutralize acids.



$$K_a = \frac{[H_3O^+][A^-]}{[HA]}$$

① Take log of both sides

② Multiply by -1

③ Rearrange, solving for pH

$$pH = pK_a + \log\left(\frac{[A^-]}{[HA]}\right) \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \text{Henderson-} \\ \text{Hasselbalch} \\ \text{Equation} \end{array} \right.$$

$[A^-]$... from the salt

$[HA]$... from the weak acid

- We ASSUME that the initial concentrations of both the acid and its conjugate are equal to the equilibrium concentrations. Valid IF there are significant amounts of both species initially.

$$\text{pH} = \text{p}K_{a, \text{acidic}} + \log \left(\frac{[\text{basic species}]}{[\text{acidic species}]} \right) \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \text{Henderson-} \\ \text{Hasselbalch} \\ \text{Equation} \end{array} \right.$$

ex: acidic buffer



$$\text{pH} = \text{p}K_{a, \text{HC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2} + \log \left(\frac{[\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2^-]}{[\text{HC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2]} \right)$$

ex: basic buffer



$$\text{pH} = \text{p}K_{a, \text{NH}_4^+} + \log \left(\frac{[\text{NH}_3]}{[\text{NH}_4^+]} \right)$$

$$\text{p}K_a + \text{p}K_b = 14,00 \quad \dots \text{ is the } -\log \text{ of } K_a \times K_b = K_w$$

Calculate the pH of a buffer made from 30.2 grams of ammonium chloride (FW = 53.492 g/mol) and 29 mL of 18.1 M ammonia diluted to 150. mL with water.

$$\text{pH} = \text{p}K_{a,\text{acidic}} + \log\left(\frac{[\text{basic species}]}{[\text{acidic species}]}\right) \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \text{Henderson-} \\ \text{Hasselbalch} \\ \text{Equation} \end{array} \right.$$



To use the H-H equation, we need to know: (1) The concentration of both the acidic and basic species. (2) pKa for ammonium ion.

$[\text{NH}_3] = ?$ $M_1 V_1 = M_2 V_2$ (Ammonia was DILUTED to 150. mL)

$$(18.1 \text{ M})(29 \text{ mL}) = M_2 (150 \text{ mL})$$

$$3.499333333 \text{ M} = M_2 = [\text{NH}_3]$$

$[\text{NH}_4^+] = ?$

$$30.2 \text{ g NH}_4\text{Cl} \times \frac{\text{mol NH}_4\text{Cl}}{53.492 \text{ g NH}_4\text{Cl}} = 0.5645704031 \text{ mol NH}_4\text{Cl}$$

$$[\text{NH}_4^+] = \frac{0.5645704031 \text{ mol NH}_4\text{Cl}}{0.150 \text{ L}} = 3.763802687 \text{ M NH}_4^+$$

$\text{p}K_a ?$; $K_{b,\text{NH}_3} = 1.8 \times 10^{-5}$; $\text{p}K_b = 4.74$; $\text{p}K_a = 14 - 4.74 = 9.26$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{pH} &= 9.26 + \log\left(\frac{3.499333333}{3.763802687}\right) = \\ &= 9.26 + -0.032 = \boxed{9.23} \end{aligned}$$

¹⁷¹ BUFFER SELECTION

- Buffer pH is controlled by the pKa of the acidic species in the buffer.

$$\text{pH} = \text{p}K_{a, \text{acidic}} + \log \left(\frac{[\text{basic species}]}{[\text{acidic species}]} \right)$$

- Choose a buffer system so that the desired pH is within +/- 1 pH unit of the pKa
- You also need to ensure that the components of the buffer do not interact with your chemistry!

BUFFER PREPARATION

- many buffers are prepared by mixing specific amounts of both components of the Buffer system (acid / conjugate base or base / conjugate acid)

Some buffer "recipes" call for making the conjugate ion FROM the weak acid or base ... by adding a STRONG acid or base!



The reaction of the strong acid with the weak base goes essentially to completion!

If you have more ammonia than nitric acid, you will end up with a solution containing a significant amount of both ammonia and ammonium ion ... a buffer!

BUFFER CAPACITY

- A buffer is good only as long as there is a significant concentration of both the acidic and basic species
- buffer capacity: how much acid or base can a buffer resist before losing its ability to buffer
- Buffer pH depends on the RATIO of acid to base!

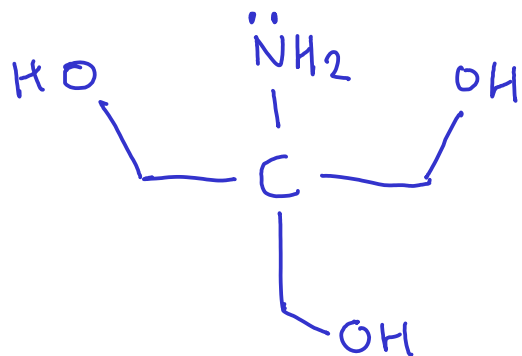
$$\text{pH} = \text{p}K_{a,\text{acidic}} + \log\left(\frac{[\text{basic species}]}{[\text{acidic species}]}\right)$$

Henderson-Hasselbalch Equation

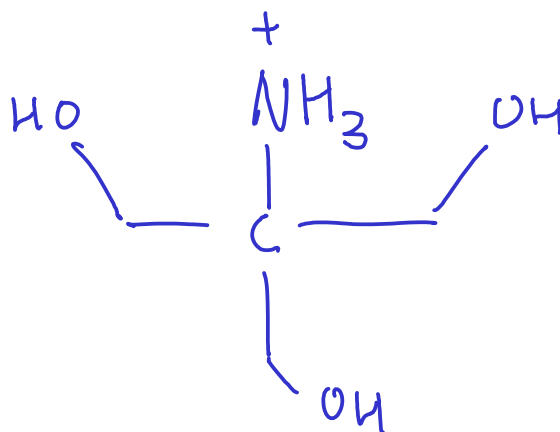
Ratio determines pH; the actual concentrations don't!

- So, if you make a buffer with 1.0M HA and 1.0M A⁻, it will have the same pH as a buffer with 2.0M HA and 2.0M A⁻ but the 2M buffer will have a higher BUFFER CAPACITY - it will resist more additions of acid or base.

Buffer calculation: Tris buffer - Tris(hydroxymethyl)-aminomethane



tris base



tris-HCl (conjugate acid of tris base)

Cl⁻

$$pK_a = 8.06$$

Calculate the pH of a buffer made from 50 mL of 0.10M tris and 50 mL of 0.15M tris-HCl. Assume volumes add.

$$pH = pK_{a,acidic} + \log \left(\frac{[basic\ species]}{[acidic\ species]} \right)$$

$$[tris]: M_1 V_1 = M_2 V_2 \quad (0.10M)(50mL) = M_2(100mL)$$

$$[tris] = 0.050M$$

$$[tris-HCl]: (0.15M)(50mL) = M_2(100mL)$$

$$[tris-HCl] = 0.075M$$

$$pH = 8.06 + \log \left(\frac{0.050}{0.075} \right) = 7.88$$