



(An Autonomous Institution)

Coimbatore-641035.

ELECTROCHEMICAL SERIES OR EMF SERIES

The standard reduction potential of a number of electrodes is given in the table. These values are determined potentiometrically by combining the electrode with another standard electrode, whose electrode potential is zero.

Electrode	Electrode reaction	Potential E _o (V)	Nature
Li ⁺ / Li	Li⁺+ e Li €	- 3.01	Anodic
Ca ²⁺ / Ca	$Ca^{2+} + 2e^{-}$ Ca	-2.93	
Na+/ Na	$Na^+ + e^- \longrightarrow Na$	- 2.90	
Mg2+/Mg	Mg ²⁺ + 2e Mg	- 2.71	
Al ³⁺ / Al	$Al^{3+}+3e^{-} \iff Al$	- 2.37	
Pb ²⁺ / Pb	$Pb^{2+}+2e^{-}$ \longrightarrow Pb	- 1.66	
Zn ²⁺ /Zn	$Zn^{2+}+2e^{-}$ Zn	-0.76	
Cr ³⁺ / Cr	$\operatorname{Cr}^{3+} + 3e^{-} \iff \operatorname{Cr}$	-0.74	
Fe2+ / Fe	$Fe^{2+} + 2e^{-} \longrightarrow Fe$	-0.44	
Co2+ / Co	$Co^{2+} + 2e^{-} \iff Co$	-0.28	





(An Autonomous Institution)

Coimbatore-641035.

Ni2+/Ni	$Ni^{2+}+2e^-$ Ni	-0.23	
Sn2+/Sn	$\operatorname{Sn}^{2+} + 2e^{-} \iff \operatorname{Sn}$	-0.14	
Fe ₃₊ / Fe	$Fe^{3+}+3e^{-}$ Fe	-0.04	
H+ / H2	2H ⁺ +2 e H ₂	+0.00	
Cu2+ / Cu	$Cu^{2+} + 2e^{-} \iff Cu$	+0.34	Reference Electrode
Ag+/Ag	$Ag^{+}+e^{-} \iff Ag$	+0.80	
Pt2+ / Pt	$Pt^{2+}+2e^{-}$ Pt	+0.86	
Au+/Au	$Au^++e^ \longrightarrow$ Au	+1.69	↓
1/2 F2 / F-	$1/2F_{2}+e^{-}$ F^{-}	+2.87	
			Cathodic

Definition:

[&]quot;An increasing order of the standard reduction potentials is called electrochemical series".





(An Autonomous Institution)

Coimbatore-641035.

Significance of EMF series or Application of Electrochemical series or Importance of Electrode Potential

1) Calculation of standard emf of the cell

The standard emf of a cell (E₀) can be calculated if the standard electrode potential values are known by using the following formula:

$$E^{0}$$
cell = $E^{0}_{R.H.E.}$ - $E^{0}_{L.H.E.}$
= E^{0}_{R} - $E^{0}_{L.}$

The standard free energy change of a cell reaction can be calculated.

Where, n = number of electrons involved in cell reaction.

F = 96500 coulombs

 $E_0 = Standard emf of the cell.$

2) The relative case of oxidation or reduction

By using the given formula:

$$-\Delta G^{\circ} = nFE^{\circ}$$

A metal ion with higher reduction potential has a greatertendency to undergo reduction. A metal ion with lower reductionpotential has a greater tendency to undergo oxidation. The elements present above the hydrogen in the series undergooxidation whereas the elements present below hydrogen in the seriesundergo reduction.

From the series, the fluorine has higher positive value of standard reduction potential (+2.87 V) and shows higher tendency towards reduction.

Similarly, lithium has the highest negative value (-3.01 V) and shows higher tendency towards oxidation.

The reduction potential of Cu is 0.34 V while Zn is -0.76 V.Even though both of them are ready to undergo reduction reactions, Cu undergoes reduction reaction more readily than Zn because Cuhas higher value of reduction potential than Zn.

3) The replacement or displacement tendency of one element by the other

Metals with a lower reduction potential have a greater tendency to replace another metal which has higher reduction potential.

In otherwords, the more electropositive metal is reduced andless electropositive metal is oxidised. The driving force for the displacement increases with increased separation of metals in the emf series.





(An Autonomous Institution)

Coimbatore-641035.

Example: The reduction potential of zinc (-0.76 V) is lower than copper (0.34 V). Hence, zinc displaces copper from its salt solution.

$$Zn + CuSO_4 \longrightarrow ZnSO_4 + Cu.$$

4) Displacement behavior of hydrogen

Metals with negative reduction potential displace the hydrogen from acid solution.

$$Zn + H_2SO_4$$
 \longrightarrow $ZnSO_4 + H_2$

$$E^{0}_{Zn2+/Zn} = -0.76 \text{ V}$$

5) Determination of equilibrium constant for the reaction

Standard electrode potential can also be used to determine the equilibrium constant (K) for the reaction we know that

$$-\Delta G^0 = RT \ln K = 2.303 RT \log K$$

 $\log K = --\Delta G^0 / 2.303 RT$
 $= nFE^0 / 2.303 RT$

From the value of E0, the equilibrium constant for the cell reaction can be calculated.