

Gravimetric Analysis Calculation Questions

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A Comprehensive Guide

Gravimetric analysis is a fundamental analytical technique used to determine the mass of a specific analyte in a sample. This method relies on the precise measurement of the mass of a precipitate formed through a chemical reaction between the analyte and a suitable reagent. The principle of gravimetric analysis is straightforward: the mass of the precipitate is directly proportional to the mass of the analyte in the original sample.

This guide provides a comprehensive overview of gravimetric analysis calculation questions, covering various aspects of the technique and offering a step-by-step approach to solving problems.

Key Concepts and Definitions

Before diving into the calculation questions, it's crucial to understand the key concepts and definitions associated with gravimetric analysis:

- Analyte:** The specific component of interest in a sample that is being analyzed.
- Precipitate:** The solid compound formed during the chemical reaction between the analyte and the reagent.
- Precipitating Agent:** The reagent used to react with the analyte and form the precipitate.
- Gravimetric Factor:** The ratio of the molecular weight of the analyte to the molecular weight of the precipitate. This factor allows for the conversion of the mass of the precipitate to the mass of the analyte.
- Stoichiometry:** The study of the quantitative relationships between reactants and products in chemical reactions. It helps in understanding the mole ratios involved in the reaction.

Types of Gravimetric Analysis:

Gravimetric analysis can be broadly classified into two main categories:

- Precipitation Gravimetry:** This method involves the precipitation of the analyte as an insoluble compound by adding a suitable precipitating agent. The precipitate is then filtered, washed, dried, and weighed.
- Volatilization Gravimetry:** In this method, the analyte is selectively volatilized from the sample by heat or chemical reaction. The volatile component is collected and measured, and the mass of the analyte is determined by difference.

Common Calculation Questions:

Let's delve into some common calculation questions encountered in gravimetric analysis:

- Determining the Mass of Analyte from the Mass of Precipitate:**

Problem: A sample of limestone CaCO_3 weighing 0.500 g was dissolved in acid and the calcium ions were precipitated as calcium oxalate CaC_2O_4 . The mass of the dried calcium oxalate precipitate was found to be 0.350 g. Calculate the percentage of calcium carbonate in the limestone sample.

Solution: 1. Write the balanced chemical equation for the reaction:

$$\text{CaCO}_3 \text{ s } \text{H}_2\text{SO}_4 \text{ aq } \text{CaSO}_4 \text{ aq } \text{H}_2\text{O} \text{ l } \text{CO}_2 \text{ g } \text{CaSO}_4 \text{ aq}$$

2. Calculate the gravimetric factor:

Gravimetric Factor = Molecular Weight of CaCO_3 / Molecular Weight of CaC_2O_4

Molecular Weight of CaCO_3 = 100.09 gmol

Molecular Weight of CaC_2O_4 = 128.10 gmol

Gravimetric Factor = 100.09 gmol / 128.10 gmol = 0.782

3. Calculate the mass of CaCO_3 in the precipitate:

Mass of CaCO_3 = Mass of CaC_2O_4 x Gravimetric Factor

Mass of CaCO_3 = 0.350 g x 0.782 = 0.274 g

4. Calculate the percentage of CaCO_3 in the limestone sample:

Percentage = (Mass of CaCO_3 / Mass of Limestone Sample) x 100

Percentage = (0.274 g / 0.500 g) x 100 = 54.8%

- Calculating the Mass of Precipitate from the Mass of Analyte:**

Problem: A solution containing 0.100 g of chloride ions (Cl^-) is treated with silver nitrate solution to precipitate silver chloride (AgCl).

Calculate the theoretical yield of AgCl precipitate.

Solution: 1. Write the balanced chemical equation for the reaction:

$$\text{AgNO}_3 \text{ aq } \text{Cl} \text{ aq } \text{AgCl} \text{ s } \text{NO}_3 \text{ aq}$$

2. Calculate the moles of chloride ions (Cl^-):

Moles of Cl^- = Mass of Cl^- / Molecular Weight of Cl^-

Molecular Weight of Cl^- = 0.100 g / 35.45 gmol = 0.00282 mol

3. Use the stoichiometric ratio from the balanced equation to determine the moles of AgCl :

Moles of AgCl = Moles of Cl^- = 0.00282 mol

4. Calculate the mass of AgCl precipitate:

Mass of AgCl = Moles of AgCl x Molecular Weight of AgCl

Molecular Weight of AgCl = 143.32 gmol

Mass of AgCl = 0.00282 mol x 143.32 gmol = 0.404 g

- Calculating the Concentration of Analyte:**

Problem: A 1000 mL sample of a solution containing an unknown concentration of analyte is titrated with a standard solution of 0.100 M AgNO_3 until the equivalence point is reached. The volume of AgNO_3 solution used is 25.00 mL.

Calculate the concentration of the analyte.

concentration of barium ions Ba^{2+} was treated with excess sodium sulfate Na_2SO_4 to precipitate barium sulfate BaSO_4 . The precipitate was filtered, dried, and weighed to be 0.150 g. Calculate the concentration of barium ions in the original solution in mg/L.

Solution 1: Calculate the moles of BaSO_4 . Moles of BaSO_4 = Mass of BaSO_4 / Molecular Weight of BaSO_4 . Moles of BaSO_4 = 0.150 g / 233.39 g/mol = 0.000643 mol.

Use the stoichiometric ratio from the balanced equation to determine the moles of Ba^{2+} . Moles of Ba^{2+} = Moles of BaSO_4 = 0.000643 mol.

3: Calculate the concentration of Ba^{2+} in the original solution. Concentration of Ba^{2+} = Moles of Ba^{2+} / Volume of Solution $\times 1000 \text{ mg/g}$. Concentration of Ba^{2+} = 0.000643 mol / 0.100 L $\times 1000 \text{ mg/g}$ = 6.43 mg/L.

4: Practical Applications of Gravimetric Analysis

Gravimetric analysis finds wide applications in various fields including:

- Environmental Chemistry: Determining the levels of heavy metals, pollutants, and other contaminants in water, soil, and air.
- Food Chemistry: Analyzing the composition of food products such as the fat content in milk or the salt content in processed foods.
- Pharmaceutical Analysis: Determining the purity and potency of drugs and pharmaceuticals.
- Industrial Chemistry: Monitoring and controlling the quality of raw materials and finished products in various industries.
- Forensic Science: Analyzing evidence to identify substances and trace elements.

Challenges and Limitations:

While gravimetric analysis is a powerful technique, it also has its limitations:

- Time-consuming: The process can be time-consuming due to the need for filtration, washing, drying, and weighing steps.
- Not suitable for all analytes: Some analytes may not form suitable precipitates or may be volatile at high temperatures.
- Sensitivity: The method may not be sensitive enough to detect trace levels of analytes.
- Interferences: Other components in the sample may interfere with the precipitation reaction, leading to inaccurate results.

Conclusion: Gravimetric analysis is a versatile analytical technique that provides accurate and precise results when properly executed. Understanding the key concepts, mastering the calculation procedures, and recognizing potential challenges are crucial for successful application of this method. By carefully selecting the appropriate precipitation reaction and controlling the experimental conditions, gravimetric analysis remains a valuable tool for determining the mass of analytes in various samples across diverse fields.

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