

Curiosity: The Compact Language of Nuclides

Curiosity Reading | CheAI Research Inc.

Packet ID: g09_u03_w10

Connection: space and medical data

Reading time: 4 minutes

Nuclide notation places mass number at upper left and atomic number at lower left of a symbol. It packs a particle inventory into a small, internationally readable label. It does not show true scale or an electron path. The notation is useful precisely because it distinguishes a particular isotope from the periodic-table average mass.

Think like a chemist

1. Read ${}^{18}_8\text{O}$ in words.
2. Which number identifies element identity?
3. Why is an electron-dot diagram a model rather than a photograph?

Word	Meaning	Packet
nuclide	atom specified by p and n count	5–14
mass number	protons plus neutrons	6–11
atomic number	proton count	4–5, 8–13