

Curiosity: A Label Is a Starting Point, Not a Verdict

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Functional-group labels help chemists organize the enormous variety of carbon-containing structures. A label points to a repeated atom-and-bond pattern, making comparisons easier. It is not a complete identity card: surrounding atoms, shape, charge, environment, and evidence still matter.

That distinction is useful far beyond chemistry. A compact model can guide a question, but responsible reasoning says exactly what the model shows and what it cannot decide on its own.