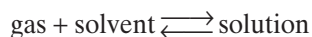


Effects of Pressure on Solubility

Changes in pressure have very little effect on the solubilities of liquids or solids in liquid solvents. However, increases in pressure increase gas solubilities in liquids.

When a gas is in contact with the surface of a liquid, gas molecules can enter the liquid. As the amount of dissolved gas increases, some molecules begin to escape and reenter the gas phase. An equilibrium is eventually established between the rates at which gas molecules enter and leave the liquid phase. As long as this equilibrium is undisturbed, the solubility of the gas in the liquid is unchanged at a given pressure.



Increasing the pressure of the solute gas above the solution puts stress on the equilibrium. Molecules collide with the liquid surface more often. The increase in pressure is partially offset by an increase in the rate of gas molecules entering the solution. In turn, the increase in the amount of dissolved gas causes an increase in the rate at which molecules escape from the liquid surface and become vapor. Eventually, equilibrium is restored at a higher gas solubility. An increase in gas pressure causes the equilibrium to shift so that more molecules are in the liquid phase.

Henry's Law

The solubility of a gas in a liquid is directly proportional to the partial pressure of that gas on the surface of the liquid. This is a statement of **Henry's law**, named after the English chemist William Henry. Henry's law applies to gas-liquid solutions at constant temperature.

Recall that when a mixture of ideal gases is confined in a constant volume at a constant temperature, each gas exerts the same pressure it would exert if it occupied the space alone. Assuming that the gases do not react in any way, each gas dissolves to the extent it would dissolve if no other gases were present.

In carbonated beverages, the solubility of CO_2 is increased by increasing the pressure. At the bottling plant, carbon dioxide gas is forced into the solution of flavored water at a pressure of 5–10 atm. The gas-in-liquid solution is then sealed in bottles or cans. When the cap is removed, the pressure is reduced to 1 atm, and some of the carbon dioxide escapes as gas bubbles. *The rapid escape of a gas from a liquid in which it is dissolved is known as effervescence* and is shown in **Figure 13**.

FIGURE 13 (a) There are no gas bubbles in the unopened bottle of soda because the pressure of CO_2 applied during bottling keeps the carbon dioxide gas dissolved in the liquid. (b) When the cap on the bottle is removed, the pressure of CO_2 on the liquid is reduced, and CO_2 can escape from the liquid. The soda effervesces when the bottle is opened and the pressure is reduced.

