

Protocol
K4 - Oxalic Acid Oxidation

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Contents

1	Objective	2
2	Experiment	2
2.1	Determination of Absorbance Maximum of KMnO_4	2
2.2	Creation of Calibration Curve for KMnO_4 Concentration	2
2.3	Measurement of the Autocatalyzed Redox Reaction of KMnO_4 and Oxalic Acid	2
2.4	Measurement of the Mn^{2+} -Catalyzed Redox Reaction of KMnO_4 and Oxalic Acid . .	3
2.5	Measurement of the Deprotonation of Phenolphthalein by Sodium Hydroxide	3
3	Results and Discussion	4

1 Objective

In this assignment, the kinetics of chemical reactions are studied through two separate experiments.

In the first experiment, the redox reaction between oxalic acid and potassium permanganate is studied: After determining the absorbance maximum of potassium permanganate, a series of solutions is produced and measured as a calibration for concentration of permanganate as a function of absorbance. Finally, the change in permanganate-concentration is measured in-situ, both with and without a catalyst, in order to determine the reaction order.

In the second experiment, the acid-base reaction between phenolphthalein and sodium hydroxide is studied. The absorbance of the reaction mixture is also measured in-situ and the reaction order regarding phenolphthalein determined.

2 Experiment

2.1 Determination of Absorbance Maximum of KMnO_4

In order to find the absorbance maximum, 79 mg of potassium permanganate were weighed out, dissolved in deionized water and diluted in a 50 mL volumetric flask, yielding a 0.01 mol/L solution. 5 mL of this solution were taken out and once again diluted in a 50 mL flask, yielding a concentration of 1 mmol/L.

2 mL of the prepared solution were filled into a cuvette and inserted into the photometer. Its absorbance was then measured in wavelength increments of 10 nm between 450 nm and 600 nm. For each wavelength, the photometer was calibrated by setting values of 0% and 100% transmission, using an opaque block and a cuvette filled with deionized water, respectively. Since high absorbances were measured at 530 nm and 550 nm, another series of measurements was taken between 520 nm and 560 nm with increments of 2 nm. Using this process, a maximum at 532 nm was determined.

2.2 Creation of Calibration Curve for KMnO_4 Concentration

To create the calibration, the 1 mmol/L potassium permanganate solution, which was prepared in Section 2.1, was further diluted to prepare six further solutions, with concentrations of 0.75, 0.60, 0.50, 0.40, 0.25 and 0.10 mmol/L. After calibrating the photometer as described in Section 2.1, the absorbance values of the seven solutions were measured at the previously determined wavelength of 532 nm. To account for inaccuracies, each measurement was taken three times, with the cuvette being filled with fresh solution after every measurement.

2.3 Measurement of the Autocatalyzed Redox Reaction of KMnO_4 and Oxalic Acid

By further diluting the 10 mmol/L solution prepared in 2.1, a solution with a concentration of 4 mmol/L was prepared. Additionally, a 40 mmol/L solution of oxalic acid was obtained by dissolving 4.000 g oxalic acid in deionized water in a 100 mL volumetric flask. Additionally, a sulfuric acid solution of about 24 w% was prepared by combining three parts water with one part concentrated (96 %) sulfuric acid.

To start the reaction, 10 mL of the oxalic acid solution, 0.4 mL of the sulfuric acid and 4 mL of the potassium permanganate solution were added to a beaker and mixed thoroughly. A stopwatch was started once the permanganate solution was added. After filling 2 mL of the mixture into a cuvette, absorbance measurements were taken every 10 seconds, the measured value reached 0 or stopped changing. This experiment was repeated two more times.

2.4 Measurement of the Mn^{2+} -Catalyzed Redox Reaction of KMnO_4 and Oxalic Acid

By dissolving AAAAAA g manganese sulfate in deionized water in a AAAAAA mL volumetric flask, a 40 mmol/L solution was prepared.

Three reactions were measured as described in Section 2.3, with the addition of adding 0.2 mL of the prepared manganese sulfate solution to the reaction mixture before measuring it.

2.5 Measurement of the Deprotonation of Phenolphthalein by Sodium Hydroxide

By diluting 7.5 mL of 2 mol/L sodium hydroxide with deionized water in a 50 mL volumetric flask, 50 mL of a 0.3 mol/L solution was prepared. Additionally, by dissolving 877 g of sodium chloride in deionized water and diluting to 50 mL, a 0.3 mol/L solution was prepared.

By diluting the former with the latter solution, small amounts of solutions with sodium hydroxide concentrations of 0.2, 0.1 and 0.05 mol/L, were prepared.

2 mL of each of the four solutions were then transferred into a cuvette, and a drop of phenolphthalein was added. The cuvettes were inserted into the photometer, which was set at 532 nm¹, and, after dropping to an absorbance value of 0.8, further measurements were taken every 30 seconds over a span of six minutes.

¹Due to an error, the desired wavelength of 550 nm was not set before starting the experiment

3 Results and Discussion