

Phospholipid

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The left image shows a phospholipid, and the right image shows the chemical makeup.

[Cell membranes](#) consist of phospholipid bilayers

Phospholipids are a type of [fat](#) that contain [phosphorus](#).^[1] They are major parts of all [cell membranes](#) because they form [lipid bilayers](#).

Phospholipid molecules usually have [hydrophobic](#) tails and a [hydrophilic](#) head.^[2] Biological membranes in [eukaryotes](#) also contain another class of lipid, [sterols](#). These are spaced out among the phospholipids. Together they provide membrane fluidity and mechanical strength. Purified phospholipids are produced commercially and have found applications in nanotechnology and materials science.^[3]

References

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

1. [↑] Introduction to lipids. Carnegie Mellon University. ^[1] [Archived](#) 2007-06-12 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
2. [↑] hydrophobic = water-rejecting; hydrophilic = water-loving.
3. [↑] Mashaghi S; Jadidi T. & Koenderink G. Mashaghi A. (2013). "[Lipid nanotechnology](#)". *Int. J. Mol. Sci.* **2013** (14): 4242–4282. doi:[10.3390/ijms14024242](#) . [PMC 3588097](#) . [PMID 23429269](#).

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