

Coue. G 4 Z C G X

macit transmons

Fuel cell Basic Chemistry & Thermodynamics

- Fuel + oxidant → H₂O + other products + electricity
- $H_2 + \frac{1}{2} O_2 \rightarrow H_2 O$, $\Delta H = 286 \text{ kJ/mol}$
- Enthalpy that can be converted to electricity in a fuel cell corresponds to Gibbs free energy.

$$\Delta G = \Delta H - T \Delta S$$

•
$$W_{el} = qE = nFE$$

•
$$W_{el} = -\Delta G$$

•
$$E_{theo} = \frac{-\Delta G}{nF} = \frac{237,340 \ J/mol}{2 \times 96,485 \ As/mol} = 1.23 \ V$$

Characteristics of Fuel Cells

Fuel Cells	Attractive Attributes	Undesirable Attributes
Phosphoric Acid Fuel Cell (PAFC).	-Low temperatures suitable for portable device applications -Ability for variable power output -Broad fuel choice	-Uses expensive platinum as a catalystElectrolyte is poor conductor at low temperatures
Proton Exchange Membrane Fuel Cell (PEM).	-Low operating temperature suitable for transportation and portable devices -High power density	-Uses expensive platinum as a catalyst -Sensitivity to fuel impurities
Molten Carbonate Fuel Cell (MCFC)	-High operating temperature improves efficiency for base load power plants.	-Not suitable for small-sized applications
Solid Oxide Fuel Cell (SOFC)	-High operating temperature improves efficiency for base load power plantsSolid electrolyte improves conductivity	- Electrolyte is made from ceramics and solid zirconium oxide that is a rare mineral
Alkaline Fuel Cells (AFC)	-Low temperature and high fuel-to- electricity efficiency	-Requirement of pure hydrogen and allergic to carbon dioxide
Direct Methanol Fuel Cells (DMFC).	-Eliminates need for fuel reformer drawing hydrogen directly from the anode -Low temperatures suitable for portable devices	-Fuel crossing from anode to cathode without producing electricity



Classification of Fuel cells:

- 1. Primary fuel cell: The reactants are passed through the cell only once and the products of the reaction being discarded. (H2 - O2 fuel cell)
- 2. Secondary fuel cell: The reactant are passed through the fuel cell many times because they are generated by different methods. (Nitric oxide - Chlorine fuel cell)

According to the Application:

- Stationary,
- Portable
- Mobile

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According to the Operating temperature:

- 1. Low temperature (25 to 100°C) Proton exchange membrane fuel cell (PEMFC), Direct methanol fuel cell (DMFC)
- 2. Medium temperature (100 to 500°C) Alkaline Electrolyte fuel cell, Phosphoric acid Fuel cell (PAFC)
- 3. High temperature (500 to 1000°C) Molten Carbonate fuel cell (MCFC), Solid Oxide Fuel Cell (SOFC)
- 4. Very high temperature (>1000 °C)

According to the type of electrolyte:

- Aqueous
- Non-aqueous
- Molten or solid

According to the physical state of fuel:

- Gas (Hydrogen, Lower hydrocarbons)
- 2. Liquid (Alcohols, Hydrazine, higher hydrocarbons)
- Solid (metals)



The primary components of a FCs are:

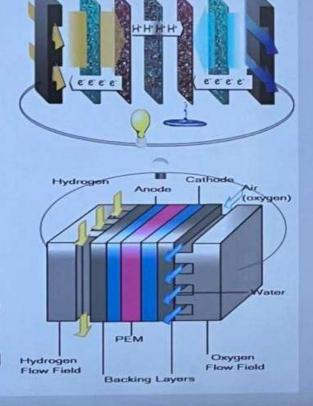
- 1. an ion conducting electrolyte,
- 2. a cathode, and
- 3. an anode,
- 4. as shown schematically in Figures
- Together, these three are often referred to as the simply a single-cell fuel cell.

Electrode: a thin catalyst layer pressed between the ionomer membrane and porous, electrically conductive substrate. Electrolyte: A chemical compound that conducts ions from one electrode to the other inside a fuel cell.

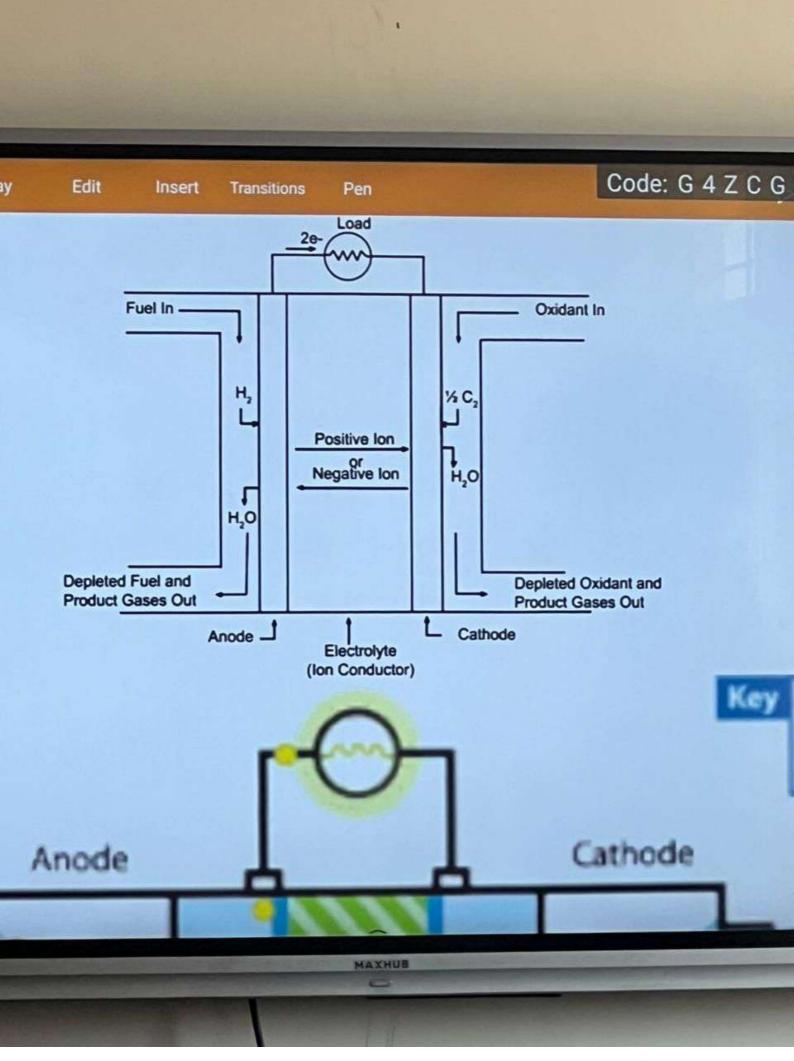
Catalyst: A substance that causes or speeds a chemical reaction without itself being affected.

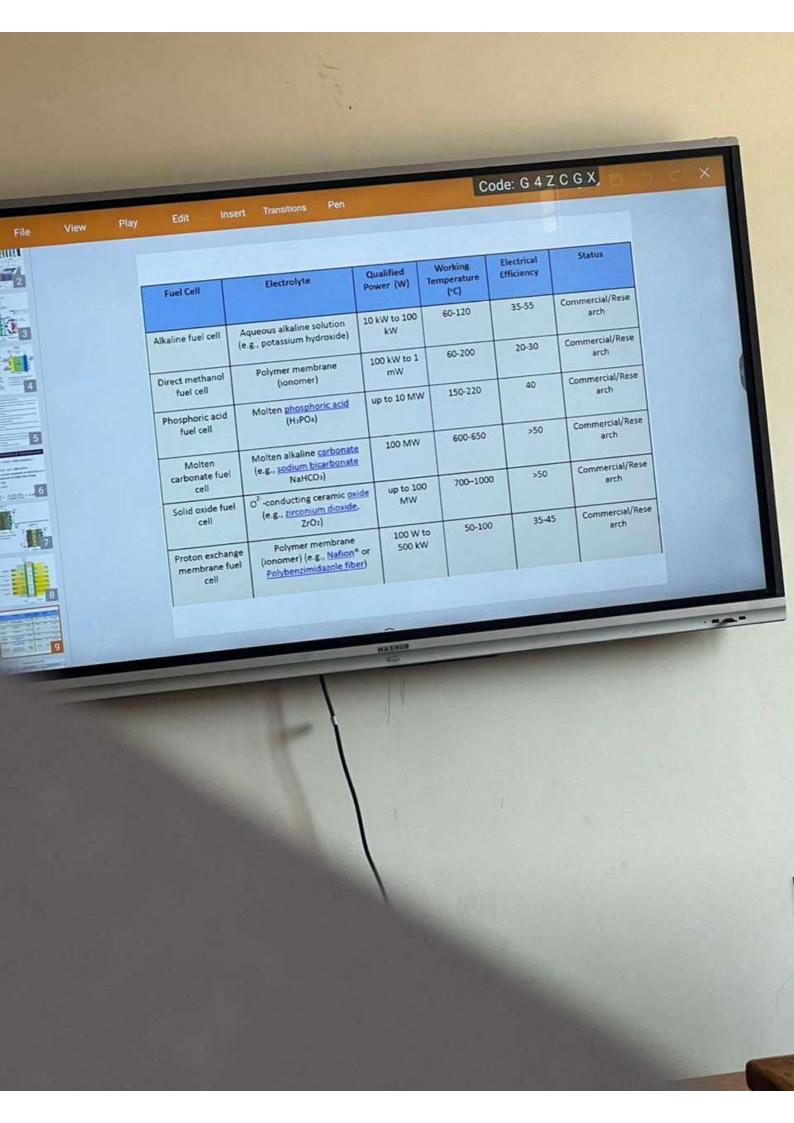
Bipolar plates: connecting the anode of one cell to the cathode of the adjacent cell.

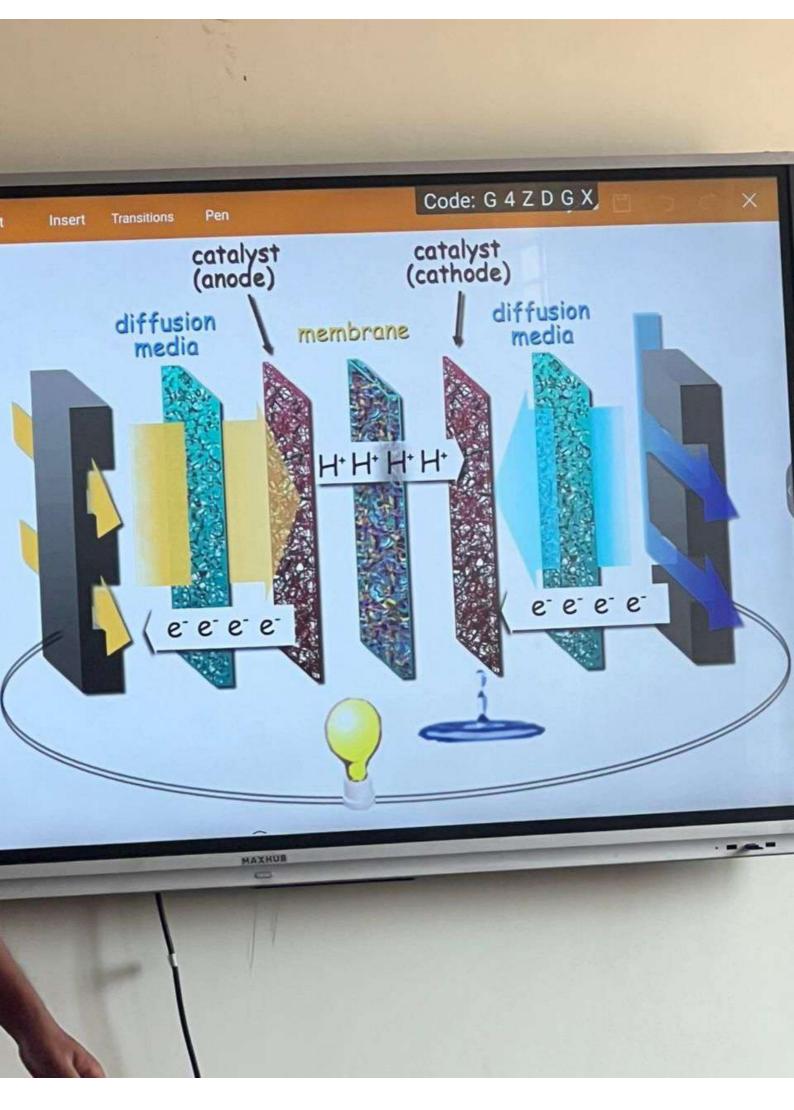
Gas diffusion layer: a layer between the catalyst layer and bipolar plates, also called electrode substrate or diffusor/current collector.

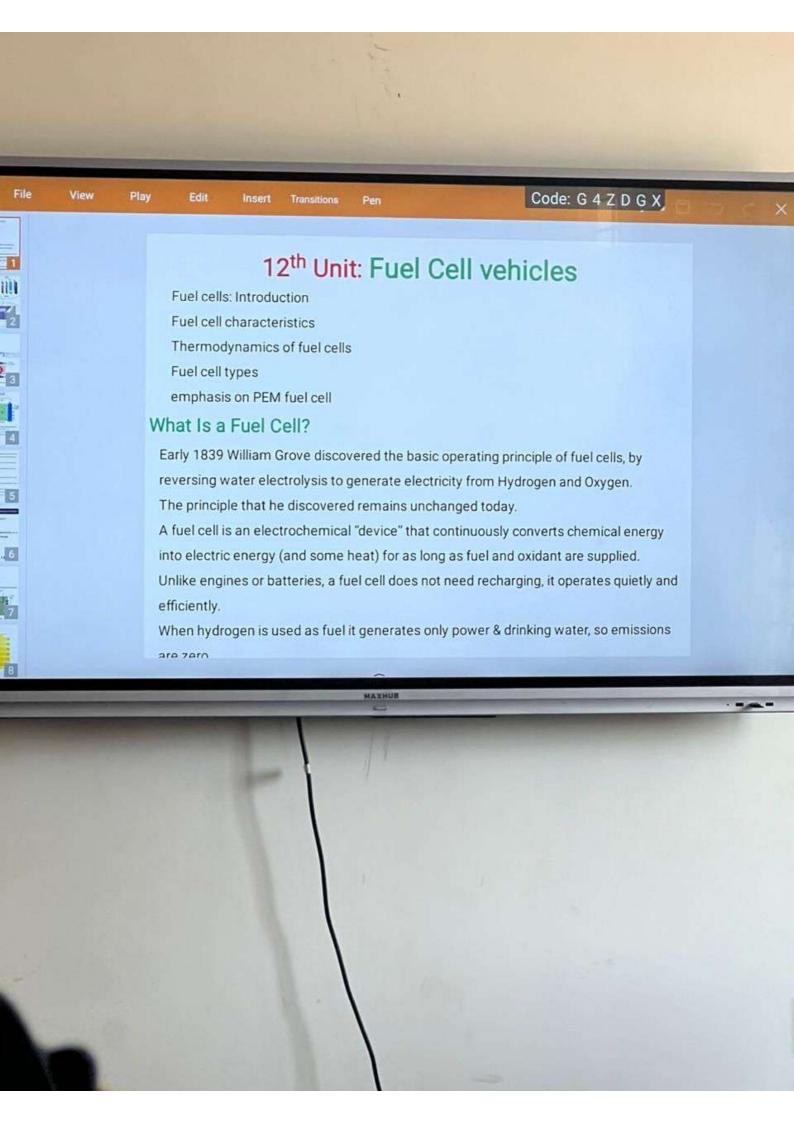


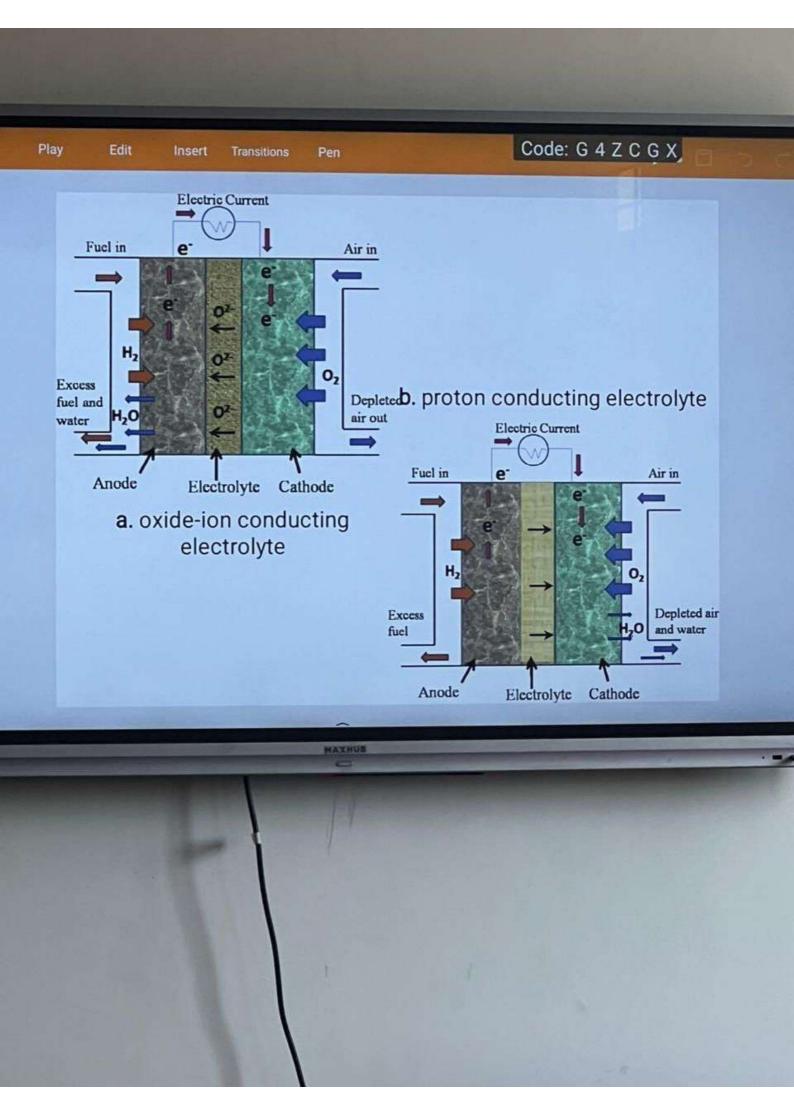










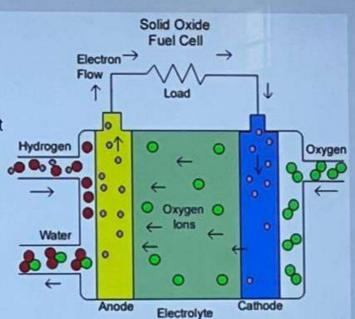


- the oxygen to the surface of the catalyst.
- 4. It also conducts the electrons back from the external circuit to the catalyst, where they can recombine with the hydrogen ions and oxygen to form water.
- 5. The electrolyte is the proton exchange membrane.
- 6. This specially treated material, which looks something like ordinary kitchen plastic wrap, only conducts positively charged ions.
- 7. The membrane blocks electrons. For a PEMFC, the membrane must be hydrated in order to function and remain stable.
- 8. The catalyst is a special material that facilitates the reaction of oxygen and hydrogen.
- 9. It is usually made of platinum nanoparticles very thinly coated onto carbon paper or cloth.
- 10. The catalyst is rough and porous so that the maximum surface area of the platinum can be exposed to the hydrogen or oxygen.
- 11. The platinum-coated side of the catalyst faces the PEM.

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How does Fuel cell work:

- It is an electrochemical energy conversion device.
- This works like batteries, but they do not run down or need recharging.
- A fuel cell consists of two electrodes a negative electrode (or anode) and a positive electrode (or cathode) sandwiched around an electrolyte.
- The atoms are stripped of their electrons in the anode.
- The positively charged protons pass through the membrane to the cathode and the negatively charged electrons are forced through a circuit, generating electricity.
- After passing through the circuit, the electrons combine with the protons and Oxygen from the air to generate the fuel cells by products water and heat.



The fuel cell can be represented as:

- 1. At anode H₂ 2H⁺ + 2e⁻
- 2. At Cathode 1/2 O2 + 2H+ + 2e- 11 H2O
- 3. Overall reaction $H_2 + \frac{1}{2} O_2 = H_2 O$