

J2 Activity and Decay

A 'mole' of nuclei contains 6.02×10^{23} nuclei. The mass of one mole of nuclei (the 'molar mass') is approximately equal to $0.001 \text{ kg} \times$ the mass number of the nucleus. Use this approximation wherever a question does not give the molar mass explicitly.

Complete the questions in the tables:

| | Half life | Decay constant $/\text{s}^{-1}$ | Half life | Decay constant $/\text{s}^{-1}$ |
|------|-----------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| J2.1 | 53 s | (a) | 12 years | (b) |
| J2.2 | (a) | 3.2×10^{-10} | (b) | 1.2×10^{-4} |

| | Decay constant $/\text{s}^{-1}$ | Activity $/\text{Bq}$ | Number of nuclei | Mass of sample $/\text{kg}$ | Molar mass $/\text{kg}$ |
|------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| J2.3 | 0 (isotope stable) | (a) | (b) | 2.4×10^{-4} | 0.012 |
| J2.4 | 0.0138 | 230 | (a) | (b) | 0.085 |
| J2.5 | 3.42×10^{-11} | 5600 | (a) | (b) | 0.239 |
| J2.6 | 1.83×10^{-9} | (a) | (b) | 3.0×10^{-5} | 0.003 |

- J2.7 a) How many nuclei are there in 5.0 mg of ^{14}C ?
 b) What is the activity of the sample, if the half life is 5700 years?
- J2.8 a) ^{238}U has a half life of 4.47×10^9 years. How many ^{238}U nuclei are needed for an activity of 5000 Bq?
 b) What is the mass of the ^{238}U sample?
- J2.9 Long half lives are measured using the principle of activity. If 3.0 mg of ^{239}Pu has an activity of 6.9×10^6 Bq, calculate the half life of ^{239}Pu .
- J2.10 A 'radioactive battery' for a long range space probe uses a radioisotope with a decay constant of $4.4 \times 10^{-12} \text{ s}^{-1}$, and a molar mass of 0.236 kg. Each time one nucleus decays, $2.5 \times 10^{-12} \text{ J}$ of electrical energy is output by the generator. Calculate the mass of the radioactive sample if the spacecraft requires 200 W of electricity.