

People: Antoine Lavoisier

The diffusion of alchemy into modern chemistry was gradual, but a key change happened with the work of Antoine Lavoisier. Lavoisier is generally credited with turning chemistry from a qualitative science into a quantitative one, and he attempted to rationalise all his experimental results within a single, consistent, theoretical framework. For this reason, he is often known as *The Father of Modern Chemistry*.

He pushed to expand access to science, funding public laboratories using his own money. Unfortunately, his aristocratic background and involvement in tax collection meant he was identified as an enemy during the French Revolution, and he was executed by guillotine during the Reign of Terror in 1794.



Lavoisier in his Laboratory: After his execution, it was said that "it took an instant to remove his head, but one hundred years might not produce another equal". He was posthumously pardoned a year later, not that he likely appreciated it.