Chapter 7 Challenge Problem Solutions

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a. The principal equilibrium in a solution of NaHCO₃ is

$$\mathrm{HCO_3}^{-}(\mathrm{aq}) + \mathrm{HCO_3}^{-}(\mathrm{aq}) \Longrightarrow \mathrm{H_2CO_3}(\mathrm{aq}) + \mathrm{CO_3}^{2-}(\mathrm{aq})$$

Calculate the value of the equilibrium constant for this reaction.

- b. At equilibrium, what is the relationship between $[H_2CO_3]$ and $[CO_3^{2-}]$?
- c. Using the equilibrium

$$H_2CO_3(aq) \Longrightarrow 2H^+(aq) + CO_3^{2-}(aq)$$

and the result from part b, derive an expression for the pH of the solution in terms of K_{a_1} and K_{a_2}