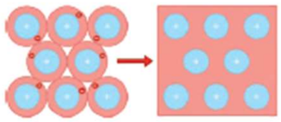
Metallic Bonding > Covalent Bonding > Polymers and giant covalent structures

Metallic Bonding

Metallic bonding occurs between **metals only**. Positive metal ions are surrounded by a **sea of delocalised electrons**. The ions are tightly packed and arranged in rows.



There are strong electrostatic forces of attraction between the positive metal ions and negatively charged electrons.

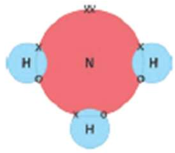
Pure metals are too soft for many uses and are often mixed with other metals to make alloys. The mixture of the metals introduces different-sized metal atoms. This **distorts the layers** and **prevents them from sliding over one another**. This makes it harder for alloys to be bent and shaped like pure metals.

Covalent Bonding

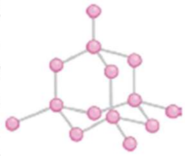
Covalent bonding is the sharing of a pair of electrons between atoms to gain a full outer shell. This occurs between **non-metals only**. Simple covalent bonding occurs between the molecules below. Simple covalent structures have **low melting and boiling points** – this is because the **weak intermolecular forces** that hold the molecules together break when a substance is heated, not the strong covalent bonds between atoms. They **do not conduct electricity** as they do not have any free delocalised electrons.

Dot and cross diagrams are useful to show the **bonding in simple molecules**. The **outer electron shell** of each atom is represented as a **circle**, the circles from each atom overlap to show where there is a **covalent bond**, and the electrons from each atom are either drawn as **dots or crosses**. There are **two different types of dot and cross diagram** – one with a circle to represent the outer electron shell and one without.

You should be able to draw the dot and cross diagrams for the following simple covalent structures: chlorine, oxygen, nitrogen, water, ammonia, hydrogen chloride and methane.

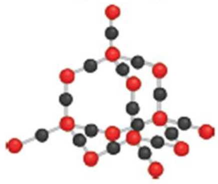


Giant Covalent Structure – Diamond



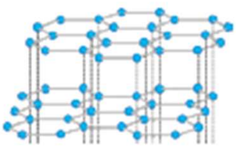
Each **carbon** atom is **bonded** to **four** other carbon atoms, making diamond very strong. Diamond has a high melting and boiling point. **Large** amounts of **energy** are needed to break the strong covalent bonds between each carbon atom. Diamond **does not conduct** electricity because it has **no free electrons**.

Silicon dioxide (silicon and oxygen atoms) has a similar structure to that of diamond, in that its atoms are held together by **strong covalent bonds**. Large amounts of energy are needed to break the strong covalent bonds therefore silicon dioxide, like diamond, has a high melting and boiling point.



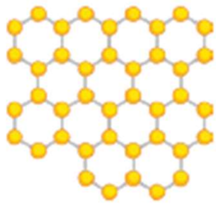
Giant Covalent Structure – Graphite

Graphite is made up of layers of **carbon** arranged in **hexagons**. Each carbon is bonded to **three** other carbons and has **one free delocalised electron** that is able to move between the layers. The layers are held together by weak intermolecular forces. The layers of carbon can slide over each other easily as there are no strong covalent bonds between the layers. Graphite has a high melting point because a lot of energy is needed to break the covalent bonds between the carbon atoms. Graphite can **conduct** electricity.



Giant Covalent Structure – Graphene

Graphene is one layer of graphite. It is very **strong** because of the covalent bonds between the carbon atoms. As with graphite, each carbon in graphene is bonded to three others with one **free delocalised electron**. Graphene is able to **conduct electricity**. Graphene, when added to other materials, can make them even stronger. Useful in electricals and composites.



Polymers

Polymers are long chain molecules that are made up of many smaller units called **monomers**. Atoms in a polymer chain are held together by **strong covalent bonds**. Between polymer molecules, there are **intermolecular forces**. Intermolecular forces **attract** polymer chains towards each other. Longer polymer chains have stronger forces of attraction than shorter ones therefore making stronger materials.