

component

Constituent of a mixture the *amount* or *concentration* of which can be varied independently. The number of components in a given system is the minimum number of independent species necessary to define the composition in all the phases of a system. It may vary with external conditions since additional chemical equilibria reduce the number of components. The term component is also often used in the more general sense as defined here under constituent.

Physical Chemistry Division, unpublished; see also 1996, 68, 966