

### **distribution isotherm (in chromatography)**

The equilibrium relation between the concentration of a sample component in the *stationary phase*  $c_S$ , and in the *mobile phase*  $c_M$ , expressed as a function  $c_S = f(c_M)$ .

Note: the relation can be influenced also by concentrations of other sample components.  $c_S$  and  $c_M$  are usually expressed per unit volume of the phase;  $c_S$  may also be expressed per mass of the dry solid phase or per unit surface area.

In some versions of chromatography, a distribution isotherm can be seen as a *partition isotherm*, an *adsorption isotherm*, or a combination of these, depending on the mechanism of separation.

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N.B. This supersedes an *earlier definition*.