

**hard acid**

A *Lewis acid* with an acceptor centre of low *polarizability*. Other things being approximately equal, complexes of *hard acids* and *bases* or soft acids and bases have an added stabilization (sometimes called 'HSAB' rule). For example the hard O- (or N-) bases are preferred to their S- (or P-) analogues by hard acids. Conversely a 'soft acid' possesses an acceptor centre of high polarizability and exhibits the reverse preference for coordination of a soft base. These preferences are not defined in a quantitative sense.

See also *class (a) metal ion*.

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