

15.1 Halogenoalkanes

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS secondary • elimination • tertiary • nucleophilic substitution
• primary

Objective

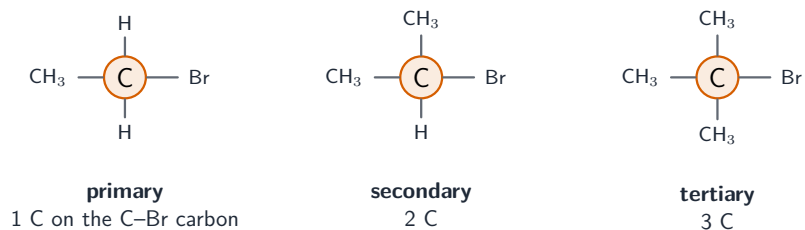
Build the skills to answer exam questions on **halogenoalkanes** – **nucleophilic substitution**, **elimination**, the **S_N1/S_N2** mechanisms, and the trend in reactivity.

You must be able to:

- classify halogenoalkanes and describe their nucleophilic substitution reactions
- describe the elimination reaction and the S_N1 and S_N2 mechanisms
- explain the different reactivities in terms of C–X bond strength

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

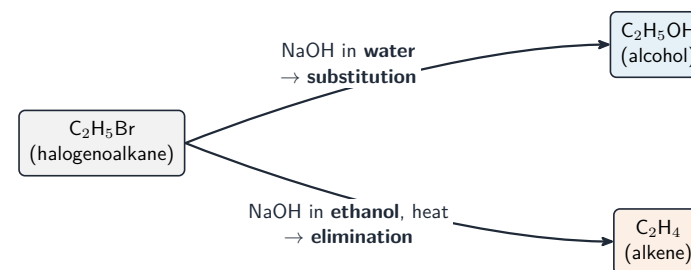
Classes and nucleophilic substitution



Primary/secondary/tertiary = 1/2/3 carbons joined to the carbon bearing the halogen

The polar C–X carbon is attacked by **nucleophiles**: NaOH(aq) → alcohol; KCN/ethanol → nitrile (+1 C); NH₃/ethanol/pressure → amine. **Test the halogen** with AgNO₃ in ethanol (white AgCl, cream AgBr, yellow AgI).

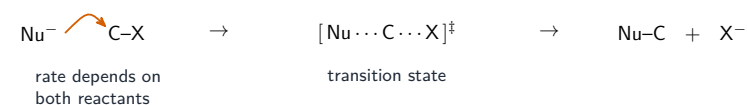
Substitution vs elimination



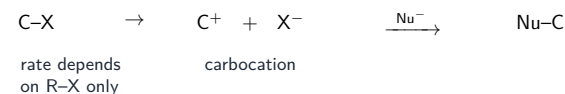
NaOH(aq) → substitution (alcohol); NaOH in ethanol + heat → elimination (alkene)

S_N1 and S_N2

S_N2: one step



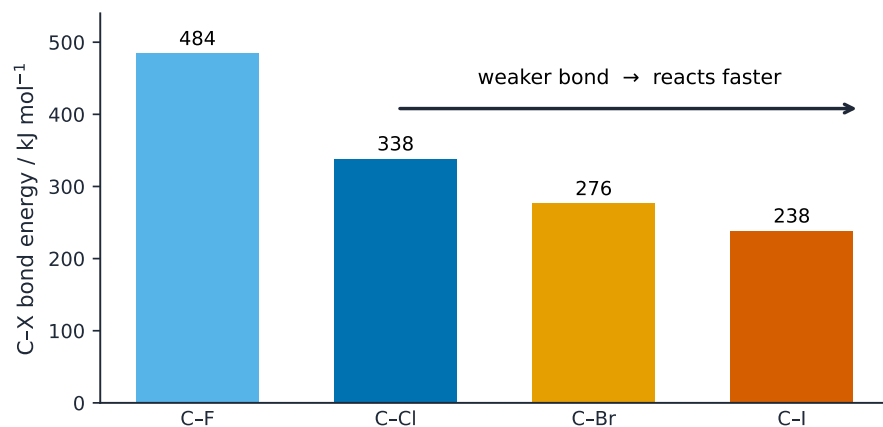
S_N1: two steps



S_N2: one step (rate depends on both). S_N1: via a carbocation (rate depends only on the halogenoalkane)

Primary → mostly S_N2; tertiary → mostly S_N1 (stable carbocation).

■ Reactivity



rate: RI > RBr > RCl (weaker C-X ⇒ faster)

The weaker the C-X bond, the faster – iodoalkanes react fastest, chloroalkanes slowest

2 Practice

2.1 State the reagent and condition to convert a halogenoalkane into an alcohol. [2]

2.2 Name the organic product when a halogenoalkane reacts with KCN in ethanol. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Which conditions favour **elimination** of a halogenoalkane to an alkene? [1]

- ☐ A NaOH in water, warm
☐ B NaOH in ethanol, heat
☐ C aqueous silver nitrate
☐ D KCN in ethanol

3.2 Which halogenoalkane reacts **fastest** with aqueous silver nitrate? [1]

- ☐ A 1-chlorobutane
☐ B 1-bromobutane
☐ C 1-iodobutane
☐ D they react at the same rate

3.3 (a) Describe the S_N2 mechanism for the reaction of bromoethane with hydroxide ions. [3]

(b) Explain why tertiary halogenoalkanes tend to react by the S_N1 mechanism. [2]

3.4 Explain why iodoalkanes are more reactive than chloroalkanes in substitution reactions. [2]