Indicators

What is an indicator?

An indicator is a substance that changes colour when it is added to acidic or alkaline solutions.

Litmus and universal indicator are two indicators that are commonly used in the laboratory.

Litmus

Litmus indicator solution turns red in acidic solutions and blue in alkaline solutions. It turns purple in neutral solutions.

Universal indicator

Universal indicator is supplied as a solution or as universal indicator paper. It is a mixture of several different indicators. Unlike litmus, universal indicator
can show us how strongly acidic or alkaline a solution is, not just that the solution is acidic or alkaline.

This is measured using the pH scale, which runs from pH 0 to pH 14.

**The PH scale**

The pH scale goes from 0 to 14: 0 is the most acidic and 14 is the most basic, or alkaline. So if something has a low pH (close to 0), then it's very acidic, and if it has a high pH (close to 14), it's very basic or alkaline.

**pH scale**

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