

Solubility of gases

Henry's law constants in H₂O
(atm x 10³)

He	131
N ₂	86
CO	57
O ₂	43
Ar	40
CO ₂	1.6

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Solution:

$$x_{CO_2} = \frac{P_{CO_2}}{K_{H,CO_2}}$$

$$x_{CO_2} = \frac{3.8 \times 10^{-4} \text{ atm}}{1600 \text{ atm}} = 2.375 \times 10^{-7}$$

$$c_{CO_2} \approx x_{CO_2} c_{H_2O} = (2.375 \times 10^{-7})(55.5 \text{ M})$$

$$c_{CO_2} \approx 1.31 \times 10^{-5}$$

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The carbonic acid equilibrium is



The K_a is

$$K_a = 10^{-pK_a} = 10^{-6.3} = 5.01 \times 10^{-6}$$

Given that the initial concentration is quite low,

$$c_{CO_2} \approx 1.31 \times 10^{-5}$$

it would be best to solve for the [H⁺] using a reaction table.

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Accounting for the [H⁺] = 10⁻⁷ in neutral water we have

$$K_a = \frac{x(10^{-7} + x)}{(c_{CO_2} - x)}$$

$$K_a(c_{CO_2} - x) = 10^{-7}x + x^2$$

$$x^2 + (K_a + 10^{-7})x - K_a c_{CO_2} = 0$$

$$x^2 + (5.11 \times 10^{-6})x - 6.56 \times 10^{-11} = 0$$

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which leads to

$$x = \frac{-5.11 \times 10^{-6} \pm \sqrt{2.61 \times 10^{-11} + 4(6.56 \times 10^{-11})}}{2}$$

$$x = 5.93 \times 10^{-6}$$

and therefore pH = 5.2.