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Data Article

# Hydrogen adsorption on surfaces with different binding energies



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#### ABSTRACT

The isotherms of molecular hydrogen adsorption in slit pores have been calculated at room temperature (T = 298 K) for various pore sizes, from 0.6 nm to 2.5 nm. The pressure has been varied from 0 to 120 bar (12 MPa). The wall surface has been characterized by different values of the adsorption energy, from 3 to 25 kJ/mol. The provided raw data give the number of molecules adsorbed per nm<sup>2</sup> of the adsorbing wall, and can be used for fast storage capacity screening of new porous adsorbents with known enthalpy of adsorption. The data are supplied with this article.

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Specifications table	
Subject area	Computational Chemistry, Physical Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, etc.
Compounds	Dihydrogen H <sub>2</sub>
Data category	Computational simulations
Data acquisition format	Isotherms
Data type	Simulated
Procedure	Monte Carlo simulations (grand canonical)
Data accessibility	With this article

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#### 57

#### 1. Rationale

Efficient and save storage of hydrogen for mobile applications (hydrogen fuel cell vehicles) remains the bottle-neck and one of the main challenges in hydrogen-based technologies. Among different storage methods, physical adsorption of molecular hydrogen in various porous structures is considered as the most attractive option: as the process of physisorption is reversible, the recovery of adsorbed hydrogen will be relatively easy. However, despite of more than 15 years of research [1,2] no material possesses yet the required adsorbing properties, and providing at least 75 g of H<sub>2</sub> per kg and 70 g per L of storing system [3-12]. An important research effort is still needed, to synthesize a material with required properties. In this paper we present a database of hydrogen adsorption model isotherms in slit pores with wall surfaces characterized by different binding energies. The model of slit pore gives a good estimation of the hydrogen uptake in carbon based materials [2-6]. The adsorption information is presented in a ready-to use form for future rapid screening of new porous structure from the point of view of potential hydrogen storage application. The only information required to estimate the total uptake is the enthalpy of hydrogen adsorption and pore size distribution.

The data base has been prepared using a homemade grand canonical Monte Carlo program, tested and verified for many years in our previous research projects [3-5], and the results were compared with the Material Studio Sorption [13] calculations.

Although it is still impossible to predict from numerical simulations how an optimal gas adsorbent should look like, computer modeling methods can partially help answer this question [14–17]. Two parameters have the essential influence on the gas uptake in a porous structure. The first one is the binding energy  $E_a$  between adsorbed hydrogen molecule and the adsorbing surface. Numerical modeling can provide very accurate information on the effect of this parameter on the total uptake. The second parameter is the specific surface area accessible for adsorption [17]. Usually both parameters are estimated during the initial experimental characterization of porous structures (for example, from nitrogen adsorption isotherms and calorimetric studies). If more structural information is available, in particular the pore size distribution, the final uptake can be calculated with higher accuracy. The ensemble of simulated isotherms published here will allow one to estimate whether a structure can be considered as potentially applicable new hydrogen sorbent.

#### 2. Procedure

Among many models of the  $H_2-H_2$  interaction exhaustively applied in the literature, we have chosen here a model that considers the  $H_2$  molecules as structureless superatoms, interacting via Lennard–Jones (6–12) potential. The most practical model of  $H_2$  superatoms interaction with graphene-like surface is the analytical form proposed by Steele [14]. In this model, a  $H_2$  molecule interacts with carbon atoms in graphene through 6–12 potential energy; the energy of adsorbed particle is an integral over the whole graphene sheet, and depends only on the vertical distance of  $H_2$ superatom from the surface (smooth surface approximation). The atomic corrugation of the pore wall can be taken into account by adding modulating corrugation term. However, the corrugation component is not explicitly treated in this paper as it represents a marginal fraction of the  $H_2$ -wall interaction energy (less than 1%). In this paper we present the detailed database of  $H_2$  adsorption isotherms (T = 298 K) calculated for the binding energies of hydrogen molecule adsorbed on a surface in the range from 3 kJ/mol up to 25 kJ/mol. This covers the energies of week hydrogen adsorbent (3 kJ/mol), typical activated carbons (4-6 kJ/mol) and the higher energies required for future applications [18]. The pore width is defined as the distance between the centers of atoms in the adjacent pore walls.

The information included in the isotherms is much more detailed than the results published before [3,12,17]. First of all, it covers the whole range of prospected working pressures of hydrogen storing vessels (0–120 bar), and the wide range of pores sizes, between 0.6 nm and 2.5 nm. This pore size range is necessary to accurately tailor the structure of the efficient hydrogen sorbent because only a monolayer of hydrogen can be adsorbed at any surface at ambient temperature. Furthermore, the prepared data base can be applied to analyze materials with heterogeneous surfaces, for which a distribution of binding energies must be assumed. Recently, we applied such procedure for reproducing

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