

# **Hydrogen and Fuel Cells**

**Emerging technologies and applications**

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*Hydrogen and Fuel Cells*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 2005

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*Music across times and fences*—a book project in progress

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# Hydrogen and Fuel Cells

Emerging technologies and applications

Second Edition

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## Preface

When the first edition of this book was written, there was an enthusiastic belief in the fuel cell and automobile industry that hydrogen vehicles would start to penetrate the market already in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This did not happen—for several reasons. The target specifications of 5-year fuel cell life and a cost under US\$10 000 for an array with 1 kW average production were not too ambitious but still proved unreachable in the short term. A 5-year fuel cell lifetime is really on the low side, as cars currently approach operational lifetimes of 20 years, spurred by concerns for environmental impact during manufacture and resource stewardship. The 5-year fuel cell would have to be replaced three times during the lifetime of the vehicle, greatly augmenting the real cost, considering both equipment and replacement work. Another factor in the present market evaluation is the strength of the competition, offered by electric cars, hybrids combining batteries with oil-based fuels, and new generations of biofuels for the transportation sector. A careful appraisal of the merits of these alternatives relative to a hydrogen-fuelled transportation sector is undertaken in this new edition, along with a similar assessment of other areas of fuel cell uses.

For the researchers and manufacturers of fuel cells and related equipment, the temporal setback is not uniquely negative, as it provides an opportunity for rethinking the basic design concepts and developing several new ideas that perhaps were left unprocessed during the feverish rush to reach the early goals. Fortunately, the relative absence of hydrogen-vehicle stories from the news headlines has not slowed down the pace of science and engineering efforts, and this edition has many new, exciting advances to present and discuss. This goes both for the basic understanding of electrochemical processes inside the cell structures, and for the development of vehicle and system concepts, with a promise to overcome the many challenges posed by the introduction of new technology that in several ways is departing from the traditional operational behaviour and existing infrastructure layout.

This edition has expanded the coverage of hybrid systems, considering the advantages of combining battery and fuel cell technologies, rather than seeing them as mutually exclusive competitors. It is demonstrated that suitable combinations of either plug-in hybrids between fuel cell and advanced battery use, or stand-alone concepts, can achieve performance and economic viability not obtainable for pure fuel cell or pure battery vehicles. The fuel cell R&D community has attracted some of the most skilled scientists and engineers, and it is those people I hope to inspire further by this volume.

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## **Preface to first edition**

These years, many scientists and engineers move into the field of hydrogen and fuel cells because it is exciting and well funded. The aim is to transform the way energy is delivered and used over the coming years, with major changes in technologies for production, distribution and conversion, as a response to political instability of many oil-producing countries, uncertainty about resources and increasing concerns over environmental effects.

This book is written to the many newcomers to the field, to students at the increasing number of courses given in the subject and to well-established scientists and developers who already have in-depth knowledge in certain sub-fields but like to keep informed about the entire field from technology to policy considerations, economical and environmental assessment. I aim to provide an introduction to people with general science background, but no special hydrogen and fuel cell experience, and also to give an up-to-date account of the frontiers of research and development to readers who need to be able to connect the emerging terminology to the concepts of conventional fields of science.

At the end of each chapter are problems and discussion topics, several of which can be used for problem-oriented mini-projects.

In fact, the pace of knowledge development in the field of hydrogen and fuel cells is so rapid that about half the content of this book is based on material less than a year old (as of the time of writing) and often not even published or found in the "in press" basket of the scientific journal publishers. It has been a pleasure to work with this extremely fresh material from the desks of my colleagues. New techniques have enabled specific investigations to be performed along with the book writing that would have been impossible 5-10 years ago.

To achieve the aim stated above I try to avoid specialist jargon or, if it is important, to define and explain the special terminology that the reader will meet in the latest scientific journals, providing the connection back to the concepts familiar to people with a physics, chemistry or biology background. The policy planner and assessor will similarly find the newest ideas and methods in these fields linked back to conventional economy and to environmental and planning sciences.

First of all, I want to convey the richness of the hydrogen and fuel cell fields and to present the challenges calling for a dedicated effort by the cream of human ingenuity, which is you, dear reader.

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# Contents

Preface	v
Contents	vii
Units and conversion factors	xii
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Possible role of fuel cells and hydrogen</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Hydrogen</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1 Production of hydrogen</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1.1 Steam reforming	6
2.1.2 Partial oxidation, autothermal and dry reforming	10
2.1.3 Water electrolysis: reverse fuel cell operation	11
2.1.4 Gasification and woody biomass conversion	21
2.1.5 Biological hydrogen production	26
<i>Photosynthesis, Bio-hydrogen production pathways, Hydrogen production by purple bacteria, Fermentation and other processes in the dark, Industrial-scale produc- tion of bio-hydrogen</i>	
2.1.6 Photodissociation	43
2.1.7 Direct thermal or catalytic splitting of water	50
<b>2.2 Issues related to scale of production</b>	<b>51</b>
2.2.1 Centralised hydrogen production	51
2.2.2 Distributed hydrogen production	52
2.2.3 Vehicle on-board fuel reforming	52
<i>Production of methanol, Methanol-to-hydrogen conversion</i>	
<b>2.3 Hydrogen conversion overview</b>	<b>59</b>
2.3.1 Uses as an energy carrier	59
2.3.2 Uses as an energy storage medium	60
2.3.3 Combustion uses	60
2.3.4 Stationary fuel cell uses	64
2.3.5 Fuel cell uses for transportation	64
2.3.6 Direct uses	64
<b>2.4 Hydrogen storage options</b>	<b>65</b>
2.4.1 Compressed gas storage	66
2.4.2 Liquid hydrogen storage	70
2.4.3 Hydride storage	71

---

<i>Chemical thermodynamics, Metal hydrides, Complex hydrides, Modelling metal hydrides</i>	
2.4.4 Cryo-adsorbed gas storage in carbon materials	89
2.4.5 Other chemical storage options	90
2.4.6 Comparing storage options	90
<b>2.5 Hydrogen transmission</b>	<b>92</b>
2.5.1 Container transport	92
2.5.2 Pipeline transport	93
<b>2.6 Problems and discussion topics</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>3. Fuel cells</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>3.1 Basic concepts</b>	<b>95</b>
3.1.1 Electrochemistry and thermodynamics of fuel cells <i>Electrochemical device definitions, Fuel cells</i>	95
3.1.2 Modelling aspects	106
3.1.3 Quantum chemistry approaches <i>Hartree-Fock approximation, Basis sets and molecular orbitals, Higher interactions and excited states: Møller-Plesset perturbation theory or density function phenomenological approach?</i>	111
3.1.4 Application to water splitting or fuel cell performance at a metal surface	122
3.1.5 Flow and diffusion modelling	135
3.1.6 The temperature factor	139
<b>3.2 Molten carbonate cells</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>3.3 Solid oxide cells</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>3.4 Acid and alkaline cells</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>3.5 Proton exchange membrane cells</b>	<b>163</b>
3.5.1 Current collectors and gas delivery system	165
3.5.2 Gas diffusion layers	169
3.5.3 Membrane layer	175
3.5.4 Catalyst action	181
3.5.5 Overall performance	186
3.5.6 High-temperature and reverse operation	187
3.5.7 Degradation and lifetime	190



---

3.6 Direct methanol and other non-hydrogen cells	191
3.7 Biofuel cells	197
3.8 Problems and discussion topics	200
<b>4. Systems</b>	<b>201</b>
4.1 Passenger cars	201
4.1.1 Overall system options for passenger cars	201
4.1.2 PEM fuel cell cars	204
4.1.3 Performance simulation	207
4.2 Other road vehicles	225
4.3 Ships, trains and airplanes	228
4.4 Power plants and stand-alone systems	233
4.5 Building-integrated systems	236
4.6 Portable and other small-scale systems	240
4.7 Problems and discussion topics	244
<b>5. Implementation scenarios</b>	<b>245</b>
5.1 Infrastructure requirements	245
5.1.1 Storage infrastructure	245
5.1.2 Transmission infrastructure	248
5.1.3 Local distribution	249
5.1.4 Filling stations	250
5.1.5 Building-integrated concepts	251
5.2 Safety and norm issues	252
5.2.1 Safety concerns	252
5.2.2 Safety requirements	255
5.2.3 National and international standards	259
5.3 Scenarios based on fossil energy	260
5.3.1 Scenario techniques and demand modelling	260
5.3.2 Global clean fossil scenario	270
<i>Clean fossil technologies, Fossil resource considerations, The fossil scenario, Evaluation of the clean fossil scenario</i>	

<b>5.4 Scenarios based on nuclear energy</b>	294
5.4.1 History and present concerns	294
5.4.2 Safe nuclear technologies	297
<i>Inherently safe designs, Technical details of energy amplifier, Nuclear resources assessment, Safe nuclear scenario construction, Evaluation of the safe nuclear scenario</i>	
<b>5.5 Scenarios based on renewable energy</b>	317
5.5.1 Global renewable energy scenarios	318
5.5.2 Detailed national renewable energy scenario	323
<i>Danish energy demand in 2050, Available renewable resources, Construction of 2050 scenarios for Denmark, Centralised scenario, Decentralised scenario, Assessment of renewable energy scenarios</i>	
5.5.3 New regional scenarios	353
<b>5.6 Problems and discussion topics</b>	359
<b>6. Social implications</b>	361
<b>6.1 Cost expectations</b>	361
6.1.1 Hydrogen production costs	361
6.1.2 Fuel cell costs	362
6.1.3 Hydrogen storage costs	368
6.1.4 Infrastructure costs	368
6.1.5 System costs	369
<b>6.2 Life-cycle analysis of environmental and social impacts</b>	372
6.2.1 Purpose and methodology of life-cycle analysis	373
6.2.2 Life-cycle analysis of hydrogen production	375
<i>Conventional production by steam reforming, Production by electrolysis, Direct bio-production of hydrogen from cyanobacteria or algae, Impacts from use of genetically engineered organisms, Hydrogen from fermentation of biomass</i>	
6.2.3 Life-cycle analysis of fuel cells	381
<i>SOFCS and MCFCs, PEM fuel cells</i>	
6.2.4 Life-cycle comparison of conventional passenger car and passenger car with fuel cells	384
<i>Environmental impact analysis, Social and economic impact analysis, Overall assessment</i>	

---

6.2.5 Life-cycle assessment of other vehicles for transportation	396
6.2.6 Life-cycle assessment of hydrogen storage and infrastructure	398
6.2.7 Life-cycle assessment of hydrogen systems	399
<b>6.3 Uncertainties</b>	400
<b>6.4 Problems and discussion topics</b>	401
<b>7. Conclusion: a conditional outcome</b>	403
<b>7.1 Opportunities</b>	403
<b>7.2 Obstacles</b>	405
<b>7.3 The competition</b>	407
<b>7.4 The way forward</b>	417
7.4.1 Hydrogen storage in renewable energy systems	417
7.4.2 Fuel cell vehicles	418
7.4.3 Building-integrated fuel cells	420
7.4.4 Fuel cells in portable equipment	421
7.4.5 Fuel cells in centralised power production	422
7.4.6 Efficiency considerations	423
<b>7.4 How much time do we have?</b>	428
<b>7.5 The end, and a beginning</b>	432
<b>References</b>	435
<b>Index</b>	483

# Units and conversion factors

## Powers of 10<sup>9</sup>

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Value</i>
atto	a	10 <sup>-18</sup>	kilo	k	10 <sup>3</sup>
femto	f	10 <sup>-15</sup>	mega	M	10 <sup>6</sup>
pico	p	10 <sup>-12</sup>	giga	G	10 <sup>9</sup>
nano	n	10 <sup>-9</sup>	tera	T	10 <sup>12</sup>
micro	μ	10 <sup>-6</sup>	peta	P	10 <sup>15</sup>
milli	m	10 <sup>-3</sup>	exa	E	10 <sup>18</sup>

## SI units

<i>Basic unit</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	
length	metre	m	
mass	kilogram	kg	
time	second	s	
electric current	ampere	A	
temperature	Kelvin	K	
luminous intensity	candela	cd	
plane angle	radian	rad	
solid angle	steradian	sr	
amount <sup>#</sup>	mole	mol	

  

<i>Derived unit</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Definition</i>
energy	joule	J	kg m <sup>2</sup> s <sup>-2</sup>
power	watt	W	J s <sup>-1</sup>
force	newton	N	J m <sup>-1</sup>
electric charge	coulomb	C	A s
potential difference	volt	V	J A <sup>-1</sup> s <sup>-1</sup>
pressure	pascal	Pa	N m <sup>-2</sup>
electric resistance	ohm	Ω	V A <sup>-1</sup>
electric capacitance	farad	F	A s V <sup>-1</sup>
magnetic flux	weber	Wb	V s
inductance	henry	H	V s A <sup>-1</sup>
magnetic flux density	tesla	T	V s m <sup>-2</sup>
luminous flux	lumen	lm	cd sr
illumination	lux	lx	cd sr m <sup>-2</sup>
frequency	hertz	Hz	cycle s <sup>-1</sup>

<sup>‡</sup> G, T, P, E are called milliard, billion, billiard, trillion in Europe, but billion, trillion, quadrillion, quintillion in the USA. M as million is universal.

<sup>#</sup> The amount containing as many particles as there are atoms in 0.012 kg <sup>12</sup>C.

**Conversion factors**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Approximate value</i>
energy	electron volt	eV	$1.6021 \times 10^{-19}$ J
energy	erg	erg	$10^{-7}$ J (exact)
energy	calorie (thermochemical)	cal	4.184 J
energy	British thermal unit	Btu	1055.06 J
energy	Q	Q	$10^{18}$ Btu (exact)
energy	quad	q	$10^{15}$ Btu (exact)
energy	tons oil equivalent	toe	$4.19 \times 10^{10}$ J
energy	barrels oil equivalent	bb1	$5.74 \times 10^9$ J
energy	tons coal equivalent	tce	$2.93 \times 10^{10}$ J
energy	m <sup>3</sup> of natural gas		$3.4 \times 10^7$ J
energy	kg of methane		$6.13 \times 10^7$ J
energy	m <sup>3</sup> of biogas		$2.3 \times 10^7$ J
energy	litre of gasoline		$3.29 \times 10^7$ J
energy	kg of gasoline		$4.38 \times 10^7$ J
energy	litre of diesel oil		$3.59 \times 10^7$ J
energy	kg of diesel oil/gasoil		$4.27 \times 10^7$ J
energy	m <sup>3</sup> of hydrogen at 1 atm		$1.0 \times 10^7$ J
energy	kg of hydrogen		$1.2 \times 10^8$ J
energy	kilowatthour	kWh	$3.6 \times 10^6$ J
power	horsepower	hp	745.7 W
power	kWh per year	kWh/y	0.114 W
radioactivity	curie	Ci	$3.7 \times 10^8$ s <sup>-1</sup>
radioactivity	becquerel	Bq	1 s <sup>-1</sup>
radiation dose	rad	rad	$10^{-2}$ J kg <sup>-1</sup>
radiation dose	gray	Gy	J kg <sup>-1</sup>
dose equivalent	rem	rem	$10^{-2}$ J kg <sup>-1</sup>
dose equivalent	sievert	Sv	J kg <sup>-1</sup>
temperature	degree Celsius	°C	K - 273.15
temperature	degree Fahrenheit	°F	$9/5 C + 32$
time	minute	min	60 s (exact)
time	hour	h	3600 s (exact)
time	year	y	8760 h

*continued next page*

<i>Type</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Approximate value</i>
pressure	atmosphere	atm	$1.013 \times 10^5$ Pa
pressure	bar	bar	$10^5$ Pa
pressure	pounds per square inch	psi	6890 Pa
mass	ton (metric)	t	$10^3$ kg
mass	pound	lb	0.4536 kg
mass	ounce	oz	0.02835 kg
length	Ångström	Å	$10^{-10}$ m
length	inch	in	0.0254 m
length	foot	ft	0.3048 m
length	mile (statute)	mi	1609 m
volume	litre	l	$10^{-3}$ m <sup>3</sup>
volume	gallon (US)		$3.785 \times 10^{-3}$ m <sup>3</sup>