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How to Read a Meniscus

Meniscus in Lab Measurements



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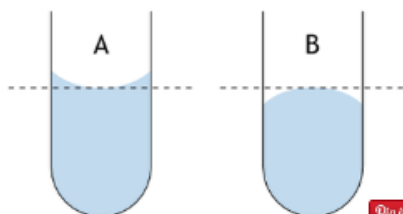
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Measure the meniscus at eye level from the center of the meniscus. In the case of water and most liquids, the meniscus is concave. Mercury produces a convex meniscus. Wikipedia Commons

strongly attracted to the container than to each other. A convex meniscus (e.g., mercury in glass) is produced when the molecules of the liquid are more strongly attracted to each other than to the container. In some cases, the meniscus appears flat (e.g., water in some plastics).

When you read a scale on the side of a container with a meniscus, such as a graduated cylinder or volumetric flask, it's important that the measurement accounts for the meniscus. Measure so that the line you are reading is even with the center of the meniscus. For water and most liquids, this is the bottom of the meniscus. For mercury, take the measurement from the top of the meniscus. In either case, you are measuring based on the center of the meniscus.

The meniscus is the curve seen at the top of a liquid in response to its container. The meniscus can be either concave or convex. A concave meniscus (e.g., water in glass) occurs when the molecules of the liquid are more

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