

SECTION OVERVIEW

Unit 3: The States of Matter

An General Chemistry Libretexts Textmap organized around the textbook

Principles of Modern Chemistry

by Oxtoby, Gillis, and Campion

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A state of matter is one of the distinct forms that matter takes on. Three states of matter are observable in everyday life: solid, liquid, and gas. Historically, the distinction between state is made based on qualitative differences in properties. Solids maintain a fixed volume and shape, with component particles (atoms, molecules or ions) close together and fixed into place. Liquids maintain a fixed volume, but has a variable shape that adapts to fit its container. Its particles are still close together like in solids, but move freely. Gases have both variable volume and shape and adapt to fit its container. Gas particles are neither close together nor fixed in place.

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