

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

21: Atomic Nuclei

Atomic nuclei are composite particles made up of protons and neutrons. These two particles are collectively known as *nucleons*. In order to better understand atomic nuclei, we first make an analogy with molecules. We then investigate the binding energies of atomic nuclei. This information is central to the subjects of radioactive decay as well as nuclear fission and fusion.

[21.1: Molecules — an Analogy](#)

[21.2: Nuclear Binding Energies](#)

[21.3: Radioactivity](#)

[21.4: Nuclear Fusion and Fission](#)

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