

Magnetic Moments for Octahedral Metal-Ligand Complexes

We learned earlier in the semester that compounds with unpaired electrons are paramagnetic and generate a magnetic field. The strength of this field is reported as a magnetic moment, with larger magnetic moments corresponding to a greater number of unpaired electrons. The table below reports magnetic moments for metal-ligand complexes of first row transition metals, along with the valence shell electron configurations for the metals. Although the primary contribution to a compound's magnetic moment is the number of unpaired electrons, there are other contributing factors that depend on the metal's ligand(s); thus, magnetic moments are reported as ranges.

| metal ion | electron configuration | range of magnetic moments |
|-----------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sc(III) | [Ar] | 0 |
| Ti(IV) | [Ar] | 0 |
| Ti(III) | [Ar]3d ¹ | 1.6–1.72 |
| V(IV) | [Ar]3d ¹ | 1.7–1.8 |
| V(III) | [Ar]3d ² | 2.7–2.9 |
| Cr(III) | [Ar]3d ³ | 3.7–3.9 |
| Cr(II) | [Ar]3d ⁴ | 3.0–3.3; 4.8–5.0 |
| Mn(III) | [Ar]3d ⁴ | 3.0–3.3; 4.8–5.0 |
| Mn(II) | [Ar]3d ⁵ | 2.0–2.5; 5.7–6.0 |
| Fe(III) | [Ar]3d ⁵ | 2.0–2.5; 5.7–6.0 |
| Fe(II) | [Ar]3d ⁶ | 0; 5.6–5.9 |
| Co(III) | [Ar]3d ⁶ | 0; 5.6–5.9 |
| Co(II) | [Ar]3d ⁷ | 2.0–2.7; 4.3–5.2 |
| Ni(II) | [Ar]3d ⁸ | 2.9–3.3 |
| Cu(II) | [Ar]3d ⁹ | 1.8–2.1 |
| Cu(I) | [Ar]3d ¹⁰ | 0 |
| Zn(II) | [Ar]3d ¹⁰ | 0 |

Discuss this data with those around you. What do you make of this data? What patterns do you see in this data? What questions does this data raise for you?