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opening extract from

The Periodic Table – elements with style

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THE PERIODIC TABLE











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1 Hydrogen

- Symbol: H
- Atomic number: 1
- Atomic weight: 1.0079
- Colour: None
- Standard state: Gas at 25 °C
- Classification: Non-metallic

I may be undersized, but don't underestimate me. I'm a petite package who packs a punch and a fiery character to boot – always remember I'm *numero uno*! I am the simplest and lightest of all the elements, the most abundant in the Universe and the source of everything in it, from matter and energy to life. I'm what powers nuclear fusion in the stars and I'm the building block for all of the other elements of the periodic table.

On Earth, I exist as a gas consisting of a pair of hydrogen atoms (H_2). Things always go with a bang when I'm around. I'm extraordinarily flammable. I was once used to fill airships, until a few fatal explosions ended my career. In the future, I am set to become important in fuel cells – a clean and efficient way of generating electricity.

Date of discovery: 1766

- Density 0.082 g/l
- Melting point −259.14 °C
- Boiling point −252.87 °C

