

## **Antimatter: "An Overview"**

Edited by Paul F. Kisak

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### Antimatter: " An Overview "

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In particle physics, antimatter is material composed of antiparticles, which have the same mass as particles of ordinary matter but opposite charges, as well as other particle properties such as lepton and baryon numbers and quantum spin. Collisions between particles and antiparticles lead to the annihilation of both, giving rise to variable proportions of intense photons (gamma rays), neutrinos, and less massive particle-antiparticle pairs. The total consequence of annihilation is a release of energy available for work, proportional to the total matter and antimatter mass, in accord with the mass-energy equivalence equation, E = mc2. Antiparticles bind with each other to form antimatter, just as ordinary particles bind to form normal matter. For example, a positron (the antiparticle of the electron) and an antiproton (the antiparticle of the proton) can form an antihydrogen atom. Physical principles indicate that complex antimatter atomic nuclei are possible, as well as anti-atoms corresponding to the known chemical elements. Studies of cosmic rays have identified both positrons and antiprotons, presumably produced by collisions between particles of ordinary matter. Satellitebased searches of cosmic rays for antideuteron and antihelium particles have yielded nothing. There is considerable speculation as to why the observable universe is composed almost entirely of ordinary matter, as opposed to a more even mixture of matter and antimatter. This asymmetry of matter and antimatter in the visible universe is one of the great unsolved problems in physics. The process by which this inequality between particles and antiparticles developed is called baryogenesis. This book gives a good overview of the search for antimatter, its nature and potential uses.



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