

Properties of Metals

Chapter 4: The World of Metals and Non-metals · Topic 1

Key Concept

Not all metals share every property to the same degree — sodium and potassium, for example, are soft enough to be cut with a knife, unlike hard metals like iron. Gold's malleability is so extreme that it can be beaten into sheets thin enough to be almost transparent, called gold leaf. Metals also tend to be sonorous, producing a ringing sound when struck, which is why they are used in bells and other musical instruments.

Quick Revision Notes

- Metals are generally lustrous, malleable, ductile, and good conductors of heat and electricity.
- Gold's extreme malleability allows it to be beaten into gold leaf.
- Sodium and potassium are exceptions — soft metals that can be cut with a knife.
- Metals are sonorous, producing a ringing sound, useful in bells and instruments.

Practice Questions

- 1 List three properties of metals.
- 2 Explain why gold is used to make gold leaf.
- 3 Name one metal that is an exception to the general hardness of metals.