Chem 1010/1800 Tip Sheet

VSEPR Theory

Valence shell electron pair repulsion (VSEPR) theory is a tool we use to predict the shapes of molecules based on how many bonds or lone pairs exist around the central atom. We call these bonds and lone pairs charge clouds (CCs), and since they are made up of electrons, they will repel each other. For this to happen, the charge clouds will arrange themselves in predictable ways:

# of CCs	Hybridization	0 Ione pairs	1 Ione pair	2 lone pairs	3 lone pairs
2	sp	● – ● – ● linear			
3	sp²	trigonal planar			
4	sp ³	tetrahedral	trigonal pyramidal	bent	
5	sp³d	trigonal bipyramidal	: see-saw	T-shaped	:

6	sp³d²				
		octahedral	square pyramidal	square planar	

Student Learning Centre

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