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**Three-dimensional flexible molecular models.** By FREDERICK S. LEE, *Metcalf Research Laboratory, Brown University, Providence 12, Rhode Island, U.S.A.*

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The purpose of this communication is to point out another method of building three-dimensional experimental molecular models inexpensively and quickly.

In this method atoms are fashioned out of styrofoam and slid along stiff wires supported in an oil-based modeling clay. In Fig. 1 the clay base is shown covered with aluminum foil to make a clean working surface and to keep the clay in a pliable condition. The obvious ad-

vantage of using a clay base is that large holes which are formed by repeated positioning of wires in a small area can be easily removed, unlike rigid bases of cork, styrofoam, etc.

Styrofoam lends itself, however, very well for making atoms because of its lightness, strength, and easy working characteristics (Gibb & Bassow, 1957). Spheres of styrofoam may be purchased (Polymer Tempera Plastics, Inc., 166 Newbury St., Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.) or they may be very quickly made to any size by grinding a cube of styrofoam against the end of a glass tube which has a diameter slightly smaller than the desired finished diameter. Further, styrofoam may be tinted with colored inks or water-based tempera poster paints.

It is felt that this method offers a way of making accurate and attractive models. Because of its flexibility it also provides for easy visualization of trial structures.

If permanent close-packed or display models are to be constructed, a Polymer Tempera binding medium is available which will bond styrofoam together. Finely divided metals or pigments may be placed in this binding medium to form a vividly colored and waterproof coating material.

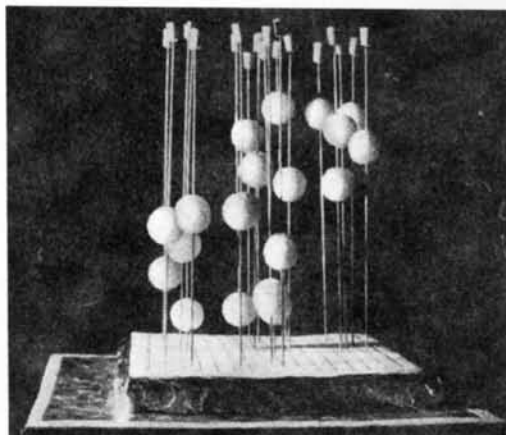


Fig. 1. Photograph of three-dimensional model.

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