

Variety in Coordination Modes of Ligands in Metal Complexes, by S. Kawaguchi, Inorganic Chemistry Concepts 11, Springer Verlag, Berlin and Heidelberg, 1988, ISBN 3-540-18305-1, pp. 123 + ix, DM 128

This is a teacher's and student's book. It aims to provide a summary of how ligands and metals interact, using selected ligands to exemplify the general behaviour. Thus the hydride anion is taken as the example for monoatomic ligands, and the text deals with the preparation of hydrido complexes, the kinds of structure formed, and the reactions of hydrido complexes, including catalytic reactions. Even dihydrogen complexes are mentioned.

The typical diatomic ligands selected are CO and N₂. The treatment is mainly of structural types for CO, but the review of N₂ complexes also discusses protonation. The triatomic ligand discussed is NCS⁻ (including factors influencing N- or S-bonding). Finally, β-dicarbonyl complexes are presented, mainly but not entirely, with reference to pentane-2,4-dione.

The reviews are informative, with many supporting references, and they are generally very up-to-date. The treatment is appropriate for advanced undergraduate students, who should benefit from its breadth and content. It would have been more useful had it introduced polyhapto species containing hydrocarbons, since students might be led to believe that the η³-allyl systems discussed represent an extreme behaviour. This is not a researcher's book, and one wonders why the effort was invested to produce a beautiful book which will doubtless be beyond the means of the majority of students who might benefit from it.

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