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Author Campbell, Quinn C, Ms

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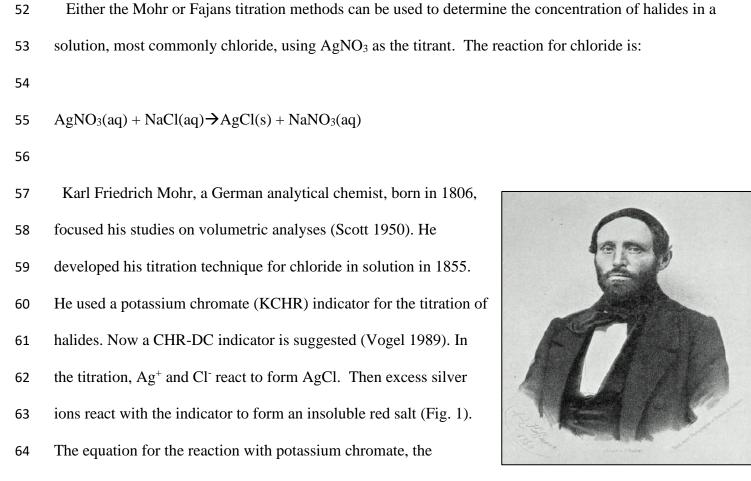
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Comparison of the Fajans and Mohr Techniques for the Titration of Chloride lons and Salinity Determination

- 4 Quinn C. Campbell¹, George C. Anderson^{2*}
- ⁵ ¹Canyon Crest Academy, San Diego, California, USA
- ⁶ ²Marine Physical Laboratory, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San
- 7 Diego, California, USA
- 8 Key Words: Mohr, Fajans, dichlorofluorescein, chromate-dichromate, chlorinity, dextrin,
- 9 titration, seawater analysis, endpoint detection
- 10 Abstract

The concentration of halides in solution, chloride being the most commonly analyzed, 11 12 can be determined by either a Mohr titration, using a chromate-dichromate (CHR-DC) indicator, or a Fajans titration, using a dichlorofluorescein (DCF) indicator. When titrating sodium chloride 13 (NaCl) solutions with known chloride concentrations, the Fajans procedure yielded results within 14 15 0.1% of the indicated concentrations. When the Mohr and Fajans titrations were performed on IAPSO Standard Seawater (IAPSO-SS), the results of the two techniques were practically 16 identical, within 0.003 units of each other. This strongly suggests that either of these techniques 17 can be used for the determination of chloride or other halides in a solution with certainty that one 18 will get comparable results. Due to better precision, ease of endpoint detection, and the less 19 hazardous nature of the reagents, the Fajans technique would be preferred over the Mohr 20 technique. The silver nitrate (AgNO₃) solutions used for these titrations were standardized 21 against solutions of NaCl. The two techniques yielded concentrations for the AgNO₃ that 22 differed by 0.29%, with the concentration determined using the Fajans indicator always higher. 23 For the Fajans standardizations, the average, standard deviation, and % RSD were 0.3519 \pm 24 0.0006 mol/kg-soln, and 0.17%. For the Mohr titrations, the values were 0.3509 \pm 0.0010, and 25

26	0.28% respectively. The higher standard deviation for the Mohr titration data could be attributed
27	to a less defined endpoint. Based on this data and the degree of agreement between the two
28	techniques, it is important that the standardizations and sample titrations use the same indicator.
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30	*Correspondence: gcanderson@ucsd.edu
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- 65 dominant reagent of the indicator, is:
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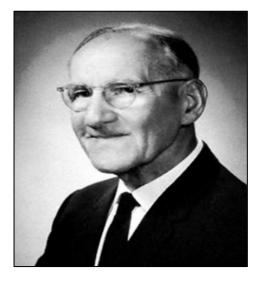
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$$2AgNO_3(aq) + K_2CrO_4(aq) \rightarrow Ag_2CrO_4(s) + 2KNO_3(aq)$$

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69 The formation of the salt produces a gradual color change to a darker shade of reddish brown, which 70 signals the endpoint of the titration. A blank determination with the indicator alone in deionized water 71 must be determined.

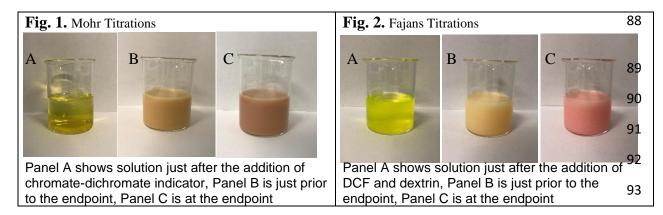
Kasimir Fajans, a Polish American physical chemist, born in 1887, primarily studied radioactivity
(Holmen 1989). In 1923, 68 years after the publication of the Mohr technique, Fajans published his
method of titration using an organic DCF adsorption indicator. In the titration, precipitated AgCl adsorbs

75	chloride ions to form a primary adsorption layer. After the
76	equivalence point, excess silver ions are primarily adsorbed.
77	Next, the negatively charged fluorescein component of the
78	indicator forms a secondary adsorption layer on the surface of the
79	precipitate, creating a pink-colored complex with the silver ions.
80	The pink complex produces a distinct color change from greenish
81	yellow to pink (Fig. 2). This analysis also requires a blank, which
82	involves titrating various amounts of NaCl.



83 Though both techniques can be used to determine the concentration of chloride ions in a solution,

little work has been performed to quantify the differences in the chloride ion concentration yields using
the two different indicators. Using solutions of NaCl and IAPSO-SS, the accuracies and the precisions
of the two techniques were investigated. Observations regarding the ease of endpoint detection and the
blank determinations are detailed below.



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95 *Materials*

Most chemical compounds required for the titrations were purchased from Acros Organics and Fisher
Scientific. The ethanol and the IAPSO-SS were purchased from Koptec and OSIL, respectively. The
balances were purchased from AND, Mettler Toledo, and Sartorious. The repeating pipettor and titrator

were purchased from Eppendorf and Metrohm. The digital density meter was purchased from Rudolph
Research Analytical. Full reagent and equipment information is provided in Appendix I.

101

102 Reagent Preparations

NaCl solutions of approximately 0.6 mol/kg solution [hereafter mol/kg-soln] (Thompson et al. 2008)
were prepared by adding ~8 g of recrystallized NaCl to a total weight of ~250 g with DI water (DIW).
The NaCl was initially oven dried at 500 degrees Celsius.

106 The indicators were prepared as detailed in Vogel's *Textbook of Quantitative Chemical Analysis*

107 (Vogel et al. 1989).

108The Fajans indicator was prepared by dissolving 0.1 g of DCF in a total volume of 100 mL using 70

mL of 95% ethanol and 30 mL of DIW. The indicator was stored in a dropper bottle

The Mohr indicator was prepared by adding ~4.2 g of potassium chromate and ~0.7 g of potassium
dichromate to 100 g of DIW.

112 The AgNO₃ solution was prepared to be ~0.35 mol/kg-soln by dissolving ~60 g of AgNO₃ in ~945 g 113 of DIW, the final weight of the solution being ~1000 g. The solution was stored in a brown bottle to 114 minimize photodegradation.

115

116 **Titration Methods**

The titration scheme was based on an entry level analytical chemistry course to minimize sample and reagent needs. Sample sizes were typically ~1 g and AgNO₃ titrants were ~1.6 g. The Fajans procedure was in accordance with "Laboratory Protocol-Chlorinity by Fajans Method" from UC San Diego's Analytical Chemistry Course, 100A (Vukovic 2017). Before each day's work AgNO₃ solution was rinsed through the Dosimat system to purge previous
solution and eliminate bubbles from the delivery lines (Metrohm 2005).

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124 AgNO₃ Standardization

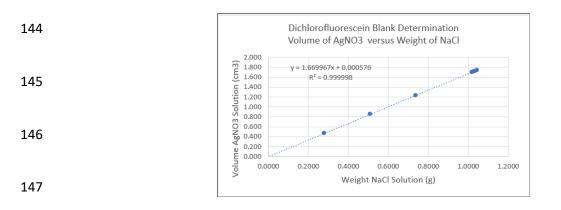
125 The AgNO₃ solution was standardized by titrating NaCl solutions multiple times with at least 3 trials per 126 technique. The concentration and standard deviation of the trials for each indicator were calculated and 127 compared.

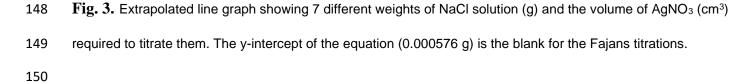
128 Sample Titrations

For all Fajans analyses, ~1 g of either the NaCl or IAPSO-SS solution was weighed (in a capped 129 plastic pipette using a top loader balance for an approximation and an analytical balance for the final 130 131 weight) to 0.1 milligrams. The ~ 1 g of sample was added to the 100 mL titration beaker followed by DIW to the 50 mL mark, ~0.05 g of Dextrin (Vogel et al. 1989) to prevent coagulation of the precipitate, 132 and 10 drops (~0.25 g) of DCF indicator. After adding a stir bar, the beaker was placed onto a magnetic 133 134 stir unit. The Dosimat dispensing tip, held in place using a ring stand and clamp, was then submerged in 135 the solution and the titration was started. Approximately 1.4 mL of the AgNO₃ solution was initially 136 dispensed, followed by decreasing increments from 0.05 mL to 0.001 mL. The endpoint was detected by a distinct change from greenish yellow to a pink tint (Fig. 2). Since precipitate is needed for the 137 138 adsorption, the blank had to be determined with NaCl in the solution. The blank was determined by titrating approximately 0.25, 0.50, 0.75, and 1 g of the NaCl solution with AgNO₃. Using the titration 139 140 data, a calibration curve was generated (Fig. 3). The line of best fit was extrapolated to define the yintercept as the blank of ~0.0006 g. 141

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The Mohr procedure was the same as the Fajans, except no Dextrin was added and 1 mL of the CHR-DC indicator was dispensed using an Eppendorf repeating pipettor. The endpoint was signaled by the appearance of a very faint reddish-brown tint (Fig. 1). The blank for the Mohr titration was completed by adding 1 mL of the indicator to DIW filled to the 50 mL mark of the beaker with ~0.5 grams of CaCO₃ to better match the background of a titrated solution (Vogel et al. 1989). The blank was consistently 0.006 cm³.

157 NaCl Standardization-Fajans evaluation

Two NaCl solutions of slightly different concentrations were prepared. One NaCl solution was used to standardize the AgNO₃ solution using the Fajans method. Using the results of this standardization the Fajans technique was then used to determine the concentration of the second NaCl solution. The second NaCl solution concentration was calculated and compared to the known concentration. The percent difference was calculated to estimate the accuracy of the Fajans technique. As part of the initial evaluation of the Fajans technique, a sample of IAPSO-SS was analyzed. The salinity from the titrations was compared with the given value.

165 Analysis of IAPSO Standard Seawater

Using standardized AgNO₃ concentrations for the two techniques, IAPSO-SS was titrated using the two methods. First the chlorinity (AMS, 2020), then the salinity of the seawater sample was calculated. Two different salinity determinations were made, each with at least three trials to determine if the differing standardization values of the two techniques affected the resulting calculated salinity values. The averages and standard deviations for each technique were calculated. The calculated salinities for each technique were compared to the known value.

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173 *Computations*

All analyses were performed by weight or volume, so appropriate densities were used to calculatemass from the weight or blank corrected volumes.

The weights of dry NaCl were converted to mass using the density of the reagent. For the deionized 176 177 water, the density at 21 degrees Celsius was used. For the NaCl solutions, a density appropriate to the concentration was calculated using data from the Handbook of Chemistry & Physics (Rumble 2022) 178 (Fig. 4). Because the temperature of the lab was constant within ± 2 degrees Celsius and the 179 180 concentration of the NaCl solutions were $\sim 0.6 \pm 0.5$ mol/kg-soln, values of density and molarity above and below the target concentration were used. Using the provided densities, molarities were converted 181 to units of mol/kg and plotted against density. Because of the limited range of concentration these data 182 could be fit using a linear least squares fit, making subsequent computations straight forward. The same 183 procedure was used in determining the density necessary for the AgNO₃ solutions (Fig. 4). For the 184 185 IAPSO-SS samples, density was measured using a digital density meter.

Blanks were determined for both techniques as described previously (for the Fajans titrations, see(Fig. 3)

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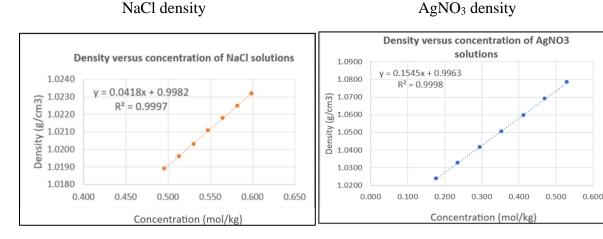


Fig. 4. Densities of AgNO₃ and NaCl solutions (g/cm³) at 20 degrees Celsius plotted against the concentration of
 these solutions in units of mol/kg with a linear least squares fit.

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The Dosimat titrator was calibrated (Fig. 5) using DIW; the temperature of the water for each dispensing was recorded. The weights were converted to mass and then volume. The differences between the calculated volumes and the nominal volumes were calculated. The data were plotted to determine the corrections needed to convert nominal volumes to corrected volumes. After determining the corrected volume and subtracting the blank, the volume of AgNO₃ solution was converted to mass using the appropriate density for the solution (Fig. 4).

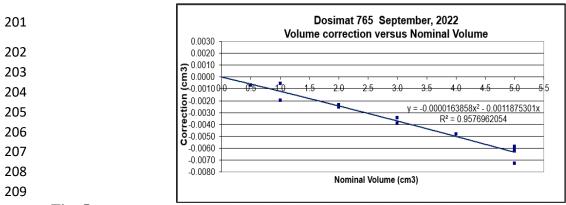


Fig. 5. Dosimat reading for the nominal volume of DIW (cm³) versus the difference between the nominal volume and the calculated volume of DIW calculated from weight (cm³) for 11 volumes of DIW.

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For the titrations of the IAPSO-SS, the weight was converted to a mass using the density determined

- using the digital density meter. Knowing the mass of the IAPSO-SS sample, the concentration of the
- AgNO₃ solution in units of mol/kg-soln, its density, and the equations found in American
- 216 Meteorological Society (AMS) Glossary of Meteorology, the chlorinity of the IAPSO-SS was
- 217 calculated. Using the equation relating the chlorinity of seawater to salinity, the salinity was calculated
- 218 (Knudsen 1901; Riley et al. 1975).
- 219

1.80655 * the chlorinity = the salinity

220 Assessment

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Table 1. AgNO₃ concentration yields (mol/kg-soln) for the Fajans and Mohr titrations of 6 NaCl solutions. The standard deviation for all standardization values and the percent difference between the two techniques for a given NaCl solution were recorded. Note that only the Fajans method was used to standardize AgNO₃ for the 4th NaCl solution.

Eciona Titrationa	Mohr Titrations	0/ Difference Detween the
Fajans Titrations		% Difference Between the
(mol/kg-soln)	(mol/kg-soln)	Values
0.3508 ± 0.0002	0.3494 ± 0.0004	0.42
0.3523 ± 0.0000	0.3516 ± 0.0003	0.21
0.3515 ± 0.0001	0.3501 ± 0.0006	0.41
0.3516 ± 0.0001	N/A	N/A
0.3527 ± 0.0002	0.3511 ± 0.0001	0.45
0.3522 ± 0.0002	0.3518 ± 0.0006	0.11

The

227 Fajans standardizations of AgNO3 yielded average concentrations 0.29% higher than the Mohr

standardizations (Table 1). The variable percent difference between the Fajans and Mohr standardization

values can be attributed to the difficulty of reproducing the endpoint associated with the Mohr titration.

Table 2. NaCl solution 2 concentration (mol/kg-soln) calculated with the standardized concentration of AgNO₃
from titrating NaCl solution 1 using the Fajans indicator. The standard deviations of the calculated concentrations
and the percent difference between the determined NaCl solution 2 concentration and the known concentration of
NaCl solution 2 were recorded.

234	AgNO ₃ Concentration	Concentration of	Known Concentration	Percent Difference of
	using NaCl Solution 1	NaCl Solution 2	of NaCl Solution 2	Calculated and Known
	(mol/kg-soln)	(mol/kg-soln)	(mol/kg-soln)	Solution 2 Values
	0.3516 ± 0.0001	0.6500 ± 0.0001	0.6506	-0.09%

236	Using the Fajans titration technique to standardize the AgNO ₃ concentration with one NaCl solution,
237	then running the Fajans titration on a second NaCl solution of different concentration, the technique
238	accurately determined the NaCl solution concentration. The percent difference between the known and
239	determined NaCl solution two concentration was <0.1%. This provided evidence that the titration
240	technique yielded accurate results (Table 2). In a second test with the Fajans method the salinity of an
241	IAPSO-SS was also accurately determined with the difference between the determined and accepted
242	values of salinity being <0.05% (Table 3). This analysis was not performed with the Mohr technique
243	since the technique has been used to determine seawater salinity for 150 years, so the accuracy was
244	already known.

Table 3. Salinity value of IAPSO-SS determined by the Fajans analysis using standardized AgNO₃. The standard deviation and percent difference between the Fajans and IAPSO-SS value were recorded.

Fajans Salinity Value	IAPSO Standard Adjusted	Percent Difference of the Fajans
	Value	Value from the IAPSO-SS Value
34.983 ± 0.004	34.998	-0.043%

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Table 4. IAPSO-SS salinity values determined by the Fajans and Mohr titrations using AgNO₃ standardization
 values on 2 different dates. The standard deviations and percent difference between the Fajans and Mohr salinity
 values were recorded.

Fajans	Mohr		Percent Difference Fajans and Mohr
35.143 ± 0.005	35.143 ± 0.015	34.994	0.000
35.145 ± 0.014	35.143 ± 0.096	34.998	0.006

251

252 Despite the lower AgNO₃ standardization values for the Mohr titrations, both techniques yielded nearly

the same salinity with an average 0.003% difference (Table 4). The fact that the differences between the

- determined salinity values and the accepted values are close to 0.42%, is likely the result of a NaCl
- solution of a concentration different than calculated, perhaps the result of preparation errors.

Campbell et al.

257 Discussion

The initial analyses of NaCl solutions and a sample of IAPSO-SS provided proof that the Fajans 258 259 technique could give results in excellent agreement with the accepted values. Even though the AgNO₃ standardizations using the Fajans and Mohr techniques gave different results, the Fajans standardizations 260 being 0.29% greater than the Mohr, the two techniques gave almost identical results when running 261 262 samples of an IAPSO-SS. These tests indicate that the Fajans titration is an equally accurate and more precise method of titration. The quantitative results, as described previously in this study [Assessment 263 section], and qualitative results, as described in this section [including differing endpoints and indicator 264 blanks], lead to the conclusion that the usage of the Fajans method for the determination of chloride ion 265 concentrations and salinity should be favored over the Mohr method. 266

The endpoints of the Fajans and Mohr titrations are vastly different. The Fajans technique results in a 267 clear shift from a greenish-yellow to a pink color at the endpoint (Fig. 2). However, the Mohr endpoint 268 has a much more gradual color change that is only a difference in shade of a reddish-brown color (Fig. 269 270 1). The less clear endpoint of the Mohr titration is the likely source of the decreased precision in the AgNO₃ standardization results (Table 1). The lack of definition in the endpoint also leads to the Mohr 271 titration taking longer, as it required more examination between dispensing of the titrant and assessing if 272 the color change indicated the end point. If one's endpoint detection does not change from 273 standardization to the determination of an unknown, similar chloride ion concentrations and salinity will 274 be determined. Therefore, since each technique yields very similar results, the Fajans technique, with its 275 lower standard deviations and less time to complete should be favored. 276

The ~0.0006 mL blank of the Fajans titration is much smaller than the 0.006 mL blank of the Mohr
titration. Though smaller, the determination of the Fajans blank is much more time-consuming, requiring
a calibration curve with multiple weights of NaCl solution being titrated. Since the Fajans titration

blank is only ~0.0006 g, it has a small effect on the final calculated chloride ion concentrations; the error in a titration of ~1.6 g would be approximately 0.05%, so in many cases it could be ignored.

When considering the hazardous nature of the reagents in the indicators, the Fajans indicator would be preferred. The KCHR-KDC indicator is toxic. Chromate and dichromate are carcinogens and mutagens that can cause lung and organ damage, genetic defects, and eye and skin irritation through inhalation and absorption through the skin (Thermo Fisher Scientific 2018, 2021). The DCF indicator is non-hazardous (Sigma-Aldrich 2019). In addition to the health hazards associated with the Mohr indicator reagents, the toxicity also makes the disposal more difficult, as the two chromate reagents are harmful to sea life and therefore require proper disposal through one's EH&S facility, not into the sewer.

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291 Comments and Recommendations

These analyses provided insight into improved methodical proceedings in the Fajans titration. Dextrin 292 293 made the endpoint much easier to see by preventing coagulation of the AgCl precipitate which occurs near the endpoint. Additionally, the Dosimat titrator increased the precision of the results compared to 294 295 the modified pipette capable of dispensing drops as small as 0.01 gram such as that used in the UCSD undergraduate lab (Vukovic 2017).. Though there is a notable difference in the precision of the 296 Dosimat, using a modified pipette could still be suitable in a classroom setting where there would likely 297 be limited access to advanced pipetting instruments and less concern about a small error range. 298 Moreover, further trials using three NaCl solutions of slightly different concentrations, rather than one, 299 could reduce the possibility of preparation errors affecting results which might explain the 0.42% 300 301 difference between the IAPSO-SS and that calculated for both indicators.

Additionally, it must be noted that the AgNO₃ volumes that were recorded in the procedure account for a larger percent error than the NaCl weights. The NaCl and seawater solutions were weighed to four (4) decimal places. The Dosimat volume readings for the AgNO₃ solutions were only three (3) decimal places.

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- 307

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353

354 Appendix I:

355 *Reagents*

- 356 Calcium Carbonate (CaCO₃), Fisher Scientific, Certified ACS, Lot 157095, 99.2% assay
- 357 Deionized water (DIW), 18.0 megohms
- 358 Dextrin, Acros Organics, Lot A0404822
- 2', 7'- Dichlorofluorescein, Acros Organics, Lot 40423367, pure
- Ethanol, C_2H_5OH , Koptec, USP, Lot # A09042002A, 190 proof.
- 361 IAPSO Standard Seawater, OSIL, Batch P164, K15 = 0.99850, practical salinity = 34.994
- 362 In only one of the tests was a new bottle of P164 used. In the others, a previously opened bottle was used. The accepted
- 363 value was increased by 0.004 to compensate for the likely increase in the value, the result of evaporation and the re-
- and the space.
- Potassium Chromate, CrK₂O₄, Acros Organics; Lot # A0307471, assay 99.5%

- Potassium Dichromate (Cr₂K₂O₇), Acros Organics, Lot AO34082, purity 99.5%,
- 367 Silver Nitrate (AgNO₃), Fisher Scientific, USP, Lot 15843A
- 368 Sodium chloride, NaCl; Fisher Scientific; Certified ACS crystalline, Lot # 217853, assay 99.0%
- 369 minimum
- 370
- 371 Equipment
- AND top loader balance, Fx-3000i, readability, 0.01 g
- 373 Eppendorf Repeater® plus repeating pipettor with 25 mL tip used to dispense 1 mL of the chromate-
- 374 dichromate indicator
- 375 Metrohm Dosimat, model 775, with handheld keyboard with speed and volume controls, readability,
- 376 0.001 mL
- 377 Mettler Toledo, model XP 205 analytical balance, readability, 0.01 mg
- 378 Mettler Toledo, model XP10002 S toploader balance, readability, 0.01 g
- 379 Rudolph Research Analytical, DDM 2911 Digital Density Meter, readability, 0.00001 g/cm³
- 380 Sartorious analytical balance, ENTRIS2241-1SUS, readability 0.0001 g
- 381 Misc for titrations: beakers, kimwipes, stir bars, stir unit, etc.
- 382

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