

Balancing Equations

Chemistry

A method that works, and the order to balance in.

A systematic approach.

1

Write the correct formulae

Never change a subscript to balance — only coefficients.

2

Balance metals first

They usually appear in one compound each side.

3

Then non-metals other than H and O

4

Then hydrogen

5

Then oxygen, and check

Fractions are acceptable; double everything to clear them.

COMBUSTION OF PROPANE



Carbon: 3 CO_2

Hydrogen: 4 H_2O

Oxygen: 10 on the right, so 5 O_2

Changing a subscript changes the substance. H_2O and H_2O_2 are different compounds, not different amounts.