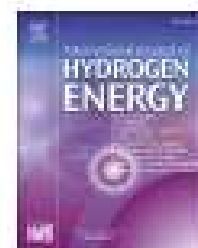


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A computational study of hydrogen adsorption on penta-NiN₂ sheet and nanotubes

Ahmed H. Atti^a, Jiewei Cheng^a, Qiang Sun^{a,b,*}^a School of Materials Science and Engineering, Peking University, Beijing 100871, China^b Center for Applied Physics and Technology, Peking University, Beijing 100871, China

HIGHLIGHTS

- Penta-sheet and nanotube for hydrogen storage.
- Each Ni site in the penta-NiN₂ sheet can only adsorb two H₂ molecules.
- The perfect penta-NiN₂ sheet can't reach the DOE target for H₂ storage.
- N-vacancy, Ni replacement, and grain boundary need to be introduced to enhance the adsorption energy and capacity.

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ABSTRACT

Stimulated by the recent synthesis of penta-NiN₂ sheet [ACS Nano 2021, 15, 13,539], we study the hydrogen adsorption on the sheet and the derived nanotubes by using density functional theory with the correction of van der Waals interactions. We have found that each Ni site can only adsorb two hydrogen molecules as expected from the 18-electron rule, the corresponding capacity is 4.44 wt%. As more H₂ molecules are introduced, H₂ can only be very weakly adsorbed on N sites. When the sheet is curved into nanotubes, the Ni–N distance is enlarged due to the stress, which weakens the orbital hybridizations between Ni and N, and reduces the charge transfer from Ni to N. The Ni ion with a less charge on the tube shows weak polarizing ability for H₂ molecule.

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Introduction

Solid materials for hydrogen storage via absorption and adsorption are of current interest as required by the green renewable energy technology. Materials suitable for hydrogen storage must meet specific requirements, such as an optimal adsorption energy window (0.1–0.6 eV/H₂) [1], and high gravimetric (5.5%) and volumetric (40 g/l) capacity targets set by the United States Department of Energy [2]. However, it is

challenging to reach these targets, which motivates scientists to design new materials.

Since the proposal of penta-graphene (PG) [3], pentagon becomes an important structural unit that has led to a paradigm shift in new materials design and synthesis. So far, more than 150 penta-sheets have been proposed [4] exhibiting unique geometry and novel properties as compared with graphene, MXene, black phosphorus, dichalcogenides, and tri-chalcogenides. Pentagon-based 2D sheets significantly expanded the 2D materials family with additional new

* Corresponding author. School of Materials Science and Engineering, Peking University, Beijing 100871, China.

E-mail address: sunqiang@pku.edu.cn (Q. Sun).

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