

inhibitor

A substance that diminishes the rate of a chemical reaction; the process is called *inhibition*. Inhibitors are sometimes called negative catalysts, but since the action of an inhibitor is fundamentally different from that of a *catalyst*, this terminology is discouraged. In contrast to a catalyst, an inhibitor may be consumed during the course of a reaction. In enzyme-catalysed reactions an inhibitor frequently acts by binding to the enzyme, in which case it may be called an *enzyme inhibitor*.

See also *effector*.

1993, 65, 2295; see also 1991, 63, 1244