Functional Groups

A **functional group** is a defined grouping of atoms in an organic molecule. A given functional group exhibits a characteristic set of chemical properties, which are largely independent of the rest of the structure of the molecule in which it is found. As a consequence, an understanding of the chemical behavior of the functional groups allows one to predict the reactivity of a wide variety of organic molecules.

We will encounter numerous functional groups throughout our study of organic chemistry. A few of the more important ones are listed in the table below (continued on the next page). At this stage, it is most important for you to learn to recognize the general structures associated with these functional groups. In each case, a simple example is provided as an illustration. (Note: A line indicates a single bond to carbon or hydrogen.)

<u>Functional Group –</u> General Structure	Example	<u>Functional Group –</u> General Structure	Example
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Alkane	Ethane	Alcohol	Ethanol
C=C	CH ₂ =CH ₂		CH ₃ OCH ₂ CH ₃
Alkene	Ethylene	Ether	Ethyl methyl ether
−C≡C−	Н−С≡С−Н	-C-SH	CH_3CH_2SH
Alkyne	Acetylene	Thiol	Ethanethiol
			CH₃SCH₃
Aromatic Ring (Arene)	Benzene	Sulfide	Dimethyl sulfide
CX (X = F, Cl, Br, I)	CH₃CH₂Br	-C-N	$CH_3CH_2NH_2$
Alkyl Halide	Ethyl bromide	Amine	Ethylamine

<u>Functional Group –</u> <u>General Structure</u>	Example	<u>Functional Group –</u> <u>General Structure</u>	<u>Example</u>
O , C H			0 0 H ₃ C C CH ₃
Aldehyde	Acetaldehyde	Acid anhydride	Acetic anhydride
	H ₃ C ^C CH ₃		H ₃ C OCH ₂ CH ₃
Ketone	Acetone	Ester	Ethyl acetate
	H_3C OH	O C N I	H_3C NH_2
	Acetic aciu	Ainide	Acetainide
O C Cl	H ₃ C ^C Cl	– C−C≡N	H ₃ C−C⁼N
Acid chloride	Acetyl chloride	Nitrile	Acetonitrile

Since the ability to recognize these functional groups, particularly when they are incorporated into a larger, more complicated molecule, is so important, you should learn the <u>names</u> and <u>general structures</u> of all of the functional groups on this handout as soon as possible.