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Buckyballs worth their weight in gold

16 May 2006

Move over carbon, a team of US chemists and physicists has uncovered evidence for the existence of hollow buckyball-like cages made of gold.



Scientists have already developed a range of spherical nanostructures based on inorganic molecules. Nanotech firm NanoMaterials, Israel, has developed a novel lubricant based on buckyball-like nanospheres made of tungsten disulphide. But no one had managed to make hollow spherical nanostructures constructed entirely from a metallic element.

Researchers at the University of Nebraska and Washington State University decided to investigate gold because of its range of highly impressive properties at the nanoscale, including catalytic activity and fluorescence.