

QUESTION: How can one determine if a chemical has been used as a solvent or as an ingredient in a process?

ANSWER: Typically, a solvent is a chemical that can dissolve another substance. When a chemical is used in an extraction or as a carrier, it is being used as a solvent. Non-solvent action would include using the chemical as a reactant or a chemical intermediate. For example, when toluene is added to other ingredients to produce trinitrotoluene, the toluene is not acting as a solvent, whereas mixing toluene and a resin to put the resin in solution (use as a carrier) is a solvent action.