

(1) Azimuthal or Subsidiary Quantum number  $l$  — It refers to the subshell or sub level to which an electron belongs that and describes the motion of the electron. The magnitude of the angular momentum of an electron (angular velocity  $\times$  moment of inertia) is related to  $l$  by the expression:

$$\text{Angular momentum} = \sqrt{l(l+1)} \frac{h}{2\pi}$$

where  $l = 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots, (n-1)$

This means that the value of  $l$  for the subshells of a shell are governed by  $n$ , when  $n=1$ , there is only one subshell,  $s$  with the value  $l=0$ , when  $n=2$  there are two subshells with the values  $l=0, 1$ , when  $n=3$ , there are three subshells that have the values  $l=0, 1, 2$ , similarly when  $n=4$  number of subshells are 4 with values  $l=0, 1, 2, 3$ . For every value of  $l$ , there is separate notation to indicate subshell. For example

$l = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, \dots$

Subshell Notation =  $s, p, d, f, g, h, \dots$

The first four notations:

S, p, d, f are abbreviations used earlier to identify spectral lines sharp, principal, diffuse and fundamental, but subsequent notations used for L > 3 proceed alphabetically e.g. i, h, g, f, ... so on. Knowing the value of  $n$  and finding out  $l$ , we designate a subshell, for example, subshell with  $n=1$ ,  $l=0$  is called 1s subshell and others are given as under

$n$	$l$	subshell notation
1	0	1s
2	0	2s
	1	2p
3	0	3s
	1	3p
	2	3d
4	0	4s
	1	4p
	2	4d
	3	4f

(iii) Magnetic Quantum number ( $m$ ) - Each subshell is comprised of one or more orbitals (regions with maximum probability of finding the electron) whose number is

equal to the number of ways the electrons in a subshell can orient themselves in space. The number of orientations is given by  $2l+1$ . Thus the number of orientations or orbitals is one when  $l=0$  (s-subshell), three for  $l=1$  (p-subshell), five for  $l=2$  (d-subshell) and seven for  $l=3$  (f-subshell).

In other words s-subshell has one s-orbital, p-subshell has three p-orbitals, d-subshell has five d-orbitals and so on.

In the absence of electric and magnetic field, these orbitals in a subshell are degenerate, that is, they have identical energy. For example for  $l=1$ , the three orbitals  $p_x, p_y$  and  $p_z$  are degenerate. But this degeneracy is split in the presence of a magnetic field.