

Combustion of Magnesium Side Reaction

Our atmosphere is 21% oxygen and 78% nitrogen (1% other gases)

95% of magnesium reacts with oxygen:



Other 5% of magnesium reacts with nitrogen:



The magnesium nitride in the problem.

Solution: add water and heat!



Since both ammonia and water are driven out of the crucible during heating, only magnesium oxide remains (magnesium nitride is converted to magnesium oxide)