

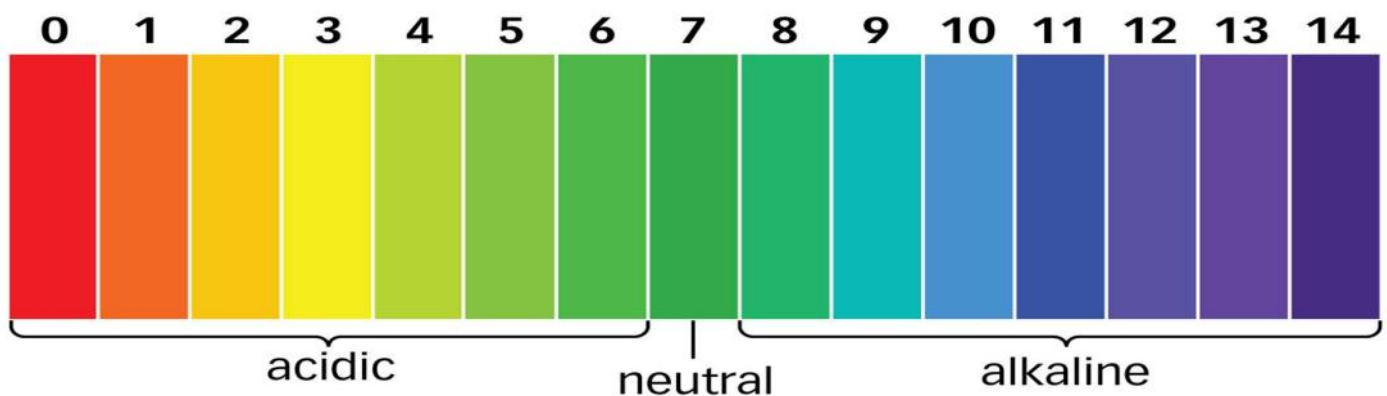
Acids and Alkalis



For hundreds of years limestone has been burnt in kilns to make quicklime. Quicklime was spread on fields and water was added to make slaked lime.

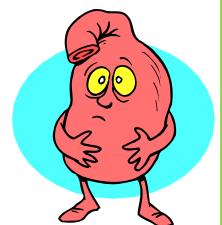
Spreading lime on the fields helped to neutralise acidic soil so that crops would grow better. Slaked lime is alkali.

The pH Scale



Many household items are either acids or alkalis too but are not hazardous.

Some acids and alkalis are stronger and must be handled with care. The strength of an acid or alkali is measured on the pH scale. Neutral chemicals are pH 7, those measuring less than 7 are acid, whilst those measuring more than 7 (up to 14) are alkaline.



Adding an acid to an alkaline (and vice versa) will neutralise it. Did you know that the liquid in your stomach is an acid? The acid in your stomach helps you digest your food.