**Rules for Counting Atoms**

1. An element can be either 1 or 2 letters for the symbol. If it is 2 letters in its symbol then the first letter is always capital and the second letter is always lower case. If the element only has one letter for its symbol then it is capitalized. (HINT: count the capital letters)

**Examples:**

Elements with two letter symbols Elements with one letter symbol

Na- Sodium K- Potassium

Fe- Iron O- Oxygen

Ne- Neon F- Fluorine

1. In compounds you will see only elements, and in some compounds you will see small numbers written after the elements, example H2O, the small number is called a subscript. If the element does not have a subscript, the subscript is 1.

* The subscript tells you how many of those atoms are in the compound.
* Example: H2O - 2 Hydrogen atoms and 1 Oxygen atom
* Example: C6H12O6 - 6 Carbon atoms, 12 Hydrogen atoms, and 6 Oxygen atoms

1. If there are parentheses in the compound then you multiply the subscript after the parentheses by the subscript that is by the element in the parentheses

* Example: Ba(OH) 2 - 1 Barium atom, 2 Oxygen atoms, and 2 Hydrogen atoms

***Counting Atoms Practice***