An element is all of the atoms with the same number of protons (e.g., 6 for carbon). Within one element, isotopes are atoms with different numbers of neutrons (e.g., 6, 7, and 8 for carbon), which give the different weights by which the isotopes are known (e.g., 12, 13, and 14 for carbon). When chemists were first learning about all of this and assembling the periodic table, they realized that isotopes of an element were all things that should be at the same place in the periodic table, and “same place” or “iso - tope” from Greek gave the name “isotope”.

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