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Ultrathin molybdenum disulfide/carbon nitride nanosheets with abundant active sites for enhanced hydrogen evolution

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The exploration of highly active catalysts for hydrogen evolution reaction (HER) is beneficial to realize high catalytic activity and enhance kinetics for water splitting. Herein, the flower-like molybdenum disulfide/carbon nitride (MoS₂/CN) nanosheets with thickness of 4.6 nm and enlarged interlayer spacing of 0.64 nm were synthesized via a facile hydrothermal method. As expected, the ultrathin thickness endowed MoS₂/CN with abundant active sites, ensuring an outstanding catalytic activity and excellent stability for HER in alkaline electrolyte. The MoS₂/CN nanocomposite can offer onset overpotential of 153 mV versus reversible hydrogen electrode (RHE). Notably, the Tafel slope is only 43 mV dec⁻¹, which is significantly better than those of reported MoS₂-based hydrogen evolution catalysts, revealing the superior HER performance particularly in catalytic kinetics. More significantly, the density functional theory (DFT) calculation further verifies that rich active sites confined in ultrathin nanostructure of g-C₃N₄ nanolayers could increase the activity of MoS₂/CN and result in enhanced HER efficiency. This study indicates that rational interaction between two different 2D materials can significantly facilitate H₂ generation, which endows extraordinary HER activity.

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