Electronic Supplementary Information

Synthesis of Multifunctional CuFe₂O₄-Reduced Graphene Oxide Nanocomposite: An Efficient Magnetically Separable Catalyst as well as High Performing Supercapacitor and First-Principles Calculations for its Electronic Structures

Madhurya Chandel, Debabrata Moitra, Priyanka Makkar, Harshit Sinha, Harshdeep Singh Hora, and Narendra Nath Ghosh*

Nano-materials Lab, Department of Chemistry, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus, Goa- 403726, India.

Synthesis of Graphene oxide (GO)

Graphene oxide was synthesized using graphite powder as reported by Hummers and Offeman.¹ In this synthesis method, 1g of graphite powder and 0.6g of NaNO₃ were mixed with 35 ml of H₂SO₄ at 0 °C. The mixture was stirred for 6 h, and then 3.8 g of KMnO₄ was added. The temperature was maintained at 35 °C for 8 h for complete oxidation of graphene sheets. After that 60ml of deionized water was added slowly and kept the temperature at 98 °C for 1 h with constant stirring. Then 2 ml of 30% H₂O₂ was added and stirred for 0.5 h. The mixture was centrifuged and washed with 10% HCl and distilled water. The yellowish brown precipitate of graphene oxide was obtained and dried at 60 °C.

Computational details

In case of CuFe₂O₄ a Monkhorst-Pack mesh of k-points $8 \times 8 \times 8$ is used, to sample the Brillouin zone for geometry optimization and for calculating the density of states. The initial superlattice structure of graphene was constructed using a $2 \times 2 \times 1$ super cell with 8 atoms and 15 Å vacuum space at z-axis and optimized using $4 \times 4 \times 1$ Monkhorst-Pack *k* point grid.²⁻³

The density of states was calculated using $8 \times 8 \times 1 \ k$ point grid. In case of CuFe₂O₄.graphene composite, the relaxed structure of CuFe₂O₄ with Fd³m space group and graphene were used for constructing the superlattice structure.⁴

The superlattice was constructed using a 2 layer slab of $CuFe_2O_4$ crystal cleaved along (111) plane with a graphene layer placed 2 Å above the slab. Here, $4 \times 4 \times 1 k$ point grids were used for optimization of structure and density of states calculations respectively.² The sizes of the unit cells of the systems simulated are listed in Table S1.

System	Structural parameters	
CuFe ₂ O ₄ Unit cell	a=b=c=8.369 Å	$\alpha=\beta=\gamma=90^{o}$
Graphene	a=b=4.9 Å; $c=31.1 Å$	$\alpha = \beta = 90^{\circ}, \gamma = 120^{\circ}$
CuFe ₂ O ₄ -slab	a=b=5.91 Å; $c=31.1 Å$	$\alpha = \beta = 90^{\circ}, \gamma = 120^{\circ}$
CuFe ₂ O ₄ -graphene	a= b = 5.56 Å; c = 31.1 Å	$\alpha = \beta = 90^\circ, \gamma = 120^\circ$
Strain on interface	$\epsilon_{11} {=}~ 2.48\%$, $\epsilon_{12} {=}~ 2.33\%$	
	Mean Absolute Strain = 2.09	%

Table S1 The sizes of the unit cells of simulated systems

Details of the input files for geometric optimization of the $CuFe_2O_4$ unit cell, $CuFe_2O_4$ (111) Slab, graphene superlattice and $CuFe_2O_4$ -graphene superlattice

CuFe₂O₄ unit cell

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 Fe 55.84500 Fe.pbe-spn-rrkjus psl.1.0.0.UPF
  O 15.99940 O.pbe-nl-rrkjus psl.1.0.0.UPF
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 Cu
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                                  0.125000000
 Fe
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 Fe
       0.240904257 0.259095743
                                  0.259095743
 Fe
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                                  0.625000000
 Fe
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                                  0.392577372
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CuFe₂O₄ (111) plane Slab

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  -0.500000000
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 Fe 55.84500 Fe.pbe-spn-rrkjus psl.1.0.0.UPF
  O 15.99940 O.pbe-nl-rrkjus psl.1.0.0.UPF
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                                  0.071280193
  0
       0.833083007 0.149084722
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  0
       0.350915278 0.666916993
                                  0.071946161
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Fe	0.500000000	0.000000000	0.136780442
Fe	0.826238307	0.673761693	0.168064170
Ο	0.649084722	0.333083007	0.201614724
Ο	0.166916993	0.850915278	0.201614724
Ο	0.657216728	0.842783272	0.202280692
Ο	0.174511878	0.325488122	0.209377607
Fe	0.333333333	0.166666667	0.273560885
Cu	0.833333333	0.166666667	0.273560885
Cu	0.333333333	0.666666667	0.273560885
Ο	0.492154789	0.007845211	0.337744162
Ο	0.009449939	0.490550061	0.344841077
Ο	0.017581945	0.000250326	0.345507046
Ο	0.499749674	0.482418055	0.345507046
Fe	0.840428360	0.659571640	0.379057599
Fe	0.166666667	0.333333333	0.410341327
Fe	0.492904973	0.007095027	0.441625055
Ο	0.833583660	0.184248612	0.475175609
Ο	0.315751388	0.666416340	0.475175609
Ο	0.323883394	0.176116606	0.475841577
Ο	0.841178544	0.658821456	0.482938492
Cu	0.000000000	0.000000000	0.547121770
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K_POI	NTS automatic		
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441 000

Graphene Superlattice

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CuFe₂O₄ (111)plane-graphene Superlattice

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 Fe 55.84500 Fe.pbe-spn-rrkjus psl.1.0.0.UPF
  O 15.99940 O.pbe-nl-rrkjus psl.1.0.0.UPF
ATOMIC POSITIONS crystal
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                                  0.053486328
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                                  0.055526283
 Fe
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                                  0.065682134
 Fe
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 Fe
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Cu	0.330484625	0.667885279	0.172098881
Fe	0.325477944	0.174522056	0.172831230
0	0.491550179	0.008449821	0.208435883
0	0.019916546	0.480083454	0.219568024
0	0.036091855	0.020681369	0.220910040
0	0.479318631	0.463908145	0.220910040
Fe	0.840700887	0.659299113	0.240915090
Fe	0.170981163	0.329018837	0.261264608
Fe	0.489202082	0.010797918	0.275419305
0	0.836454992	0.156193889	0.300031281
0	0.343806111	0.663545008	0.300031281
0	0.322010332	0.177989668	0.304873837
0	0.848333984	0.651666016	0.312567769
Fe	0.024557333	0.475442667	0.330573325
Cu	0.506237702	0.507847952	0.344659584
Cu	0.992152048	0.993762298	0.344659584
С	0.833763805	0.684619934	0.453741408
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K_POINTS automatic 441 000



Fig. S1 EDS spectra of synthesized 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO nanocomposite.



Fig. S2 FT-IR spectra of (a) GO, and (b) 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO nanocomposite.



Fig. S3 Raman spectra of (a) GO, (b) RGO, and (c) 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO nanocomposite.



Fig. S4 TGA curve of (a) pure $CuFe_2O_4$, (b) $96CuFe_2O_4-4RGO$, (c) $92CuFe_2O_4-8RGO$ nanocomposite, and (d) GO.



Fig. S5 N_2 adsorption-desorption isotherms and (inset) pore size distribution of synthesized (a) pure CuFe₂O₄ and (b) 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO nanocomposite.



Fig. S6 Room temperature magnetic hysteresis loops of (a) pure CuFe₂O₄, (b) 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO.



Fig. S7 The initial structure of (a) $CuFe_2O_4$ unit cell, (b) graphene superlattice, (c) $CuFe_2O_4$ (111) slab, and (d) $CuFe_2O_4$ -graphene superlattice.



Fig. S8 The optimized structure of (a) $CuFe_2O_4$ unit cell, (b) graphene superlattice, (c) $CuFe_2O_4$ (111) slab and (d) $CuFe_2O_4$ -graphene superlattice.

Table S2 Comparison of optimized structural parameter of graphene superlattice with the reported	
values.	

Material	Structural Parameters	Positional Parameters	References
Graphene	a = 1.42 Å -	C(1): 0.1933, 0.1433, 0.8127;	[5]
(P6/mmm		C(2): 0.6933, 0.1433, 0.8126;	
space group)		C(3): 0.3600, 0.3100, 0.8127;	
		C(4): 0.8600, 0.3100, 0.8126;	
		C(5): 0.1933, 0.6433, 0.8126;	
		C(6): 0.6933, 0.6433, 0.8127;	
		C(7): 0.3600, 0.8100, 0.8127;	
		C(8): 0.8600, 0.8100, 0.8127;	
	a = 1.42 Å	-	[6]
	a = 1.42 Å	C(1): 0.1933, 0.1433, 0.8127;	This work
		C(2): 0.6933, 0.1433, 0.8126;	
		C(3): 0.3600, 0.3100, 0.8127;	
		C(4): 0.8600, 0.3100, 0.8126;	
		C(5): 0.1933, 0.6433, 0.8126;	
		C(6): 0.6933, 0.6433, 0.8127;	
		C(7): 0.3600, 0.8100, 0.8127;	
		C(8): 0.8600, 0.8100, 0.8127;	

System	Method of optimization	Structural parameters	Band gap obtained from DFT calculation	References
CuFe ₂ O ₄	DFT	a= b = c =5.777 Å	-	[4]
$(Fd^{3}m)$		$\alpha = \beta = \gamma = 60^{\circ}$		
Cubic				
CuFe ₂ O ₄	DFT+U	a=b=c=5.917 Å	-	[4]
(Fd ³ m)		$\alpha = \beta = \gamma = 60^{\circ}$		
Cubic				
CuFe ₂ O ₄	DFT	a= b = 5.976 Å, c = 5.676 Å		[4]
		$\alpha = \beta = 61.64 \circ \gamma = 57.03 \circ$		
CuFe ₂ O ₄	DFT+U	a= b = 6.059 Å, c = 5.912 Å	1.429 eV (Indirect band	[4]
		$\alpha = \beta = 60.80 \circ \gamma = 57.57^{\circ}$	gap)	
CuFe ₂ O ₄	PBESOL and	a=b=c=8.389 Å	0.603 eV	[7]
$(Fd^{\overline{3}}m)$	GGA+U	$\alpha=\beta=\gamma=90^{o}$		
Cubic				
CuFe ₂ O ₄	GGA+U	a= b = 8.136 Å, c = 8.669 Å	1.2 eV	[8]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	GGA	a=b=c=8.37 Å	-	[9]
Cubic				
CuFe ₂ O ₄	PBE +	a =b= c= 8.369 Å	1.62 eV	This work
(Fd ³ m)	Grimme-D2	$\alpha=\beta=\gamma=90^{o}$	(Majority) and 1.43 eV (Minority)	
Cubic			(winority)	

Table S3 Comparison of the optimized structural parameter and band gap of $CuFe_2O_4$ unit cellwith the reported values obtained by different theoretical calculations.

Material	Structural Parameters	References
CuFe ₂ O ₄	a = 8.37 Å	[10]
Cubic	a = 8.371 Å	[11]
	a = 8.374 Å	[12]
	a = 8.390 Å	[13]
	a = 8.369 Å	This work

Table S4 Comparison of optimized structural parameter of CuFe₂O₄ unit cell with the reported experimental values.



Fig. S9 Electronic band structures of (a) graphene superlattice, (b) $CuFe_2O_4$ unit cell for majority band, (c) $CuFe_2O_4$ unit cell for minority band, (d) $CuFe_2O_4$ -graphene superlattice for spin-up, and (e) $CuFe_2O_4$ -graphene superlattice for spin-down. The Fermi level is referenced to zero energy, as indicated by the dotted line.



Fig. S10 Projected density of states of (a) graphene, (b) $CuFe_2O_4$ superlattice, and (c) $CuFe_2O_4$ graphene superlattice. The Fermi level is referenced to zero energy, as indicated by the dotted line.



Fig. S11 The plot of transformed Kubelka-Munk function versus the energy of light for pure $CuFe_2O_4$.

Table S5 Reaction completion time and the apparent rate constant of reduction of 4nitrophenol when the reaction was catalyzed by pure $CuFe_2O_4$ and different $CuFe_2O_4$ -RGO nanocomposites.

Sr. no.	Composition of the catalyst	Reaction completion	Apparent rate
		time (min)	constant (K_{app}) s ⁻¹
1	Pure CuFe ₂ O ₄	12	5.7 (± 0.3)× 10 ⁻³
2	98 CuFe ₂ O ₄ -2RGO	7	$8.0 (\pm 0.8) \times 10^{-3}$
3	96 CuFe ₂ O ₄ -4RGO	4	$17.2 (\pm 0.6) \times 10^{-3}$
4	94 CuFe ₂ O ₄ -6RGO	5	$10.3 (\pm 2.0) \times 10^{-3}$
5	92 CuFe ₂ O ₄ -8RGO	6	9.8 (± 1.0) × 10 ⁻³

Table S6 Comparison of the catalytic efficiency of $96CuFe_2O_4$ -4RGO with various reportedcatalysts for the reduction reaction of 4-NP in presence of NaBH₄.

Catalyst	Rate Constant	Reference	
	(K _{app})		
Au nanoparticle	9.19×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[14]	
Ag nanoparticle	4.06×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[14]	
Cu nanoparticle	1.5×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[15]	
Ag@SBA-15	1.7×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[16]	
Au ₁ -Cu ₃ /rGO	96×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[17]	

Ag@CoFe ₂ O ₄	19.6×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[18]
Cu@SBA-15	17.3×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[19]
Ag@Fe ₃ O ₄	5.8×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[20]
Fe ₃ O ₄ @SiO ₂ -Ag	7.6×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[21]
Au-Fe ₃ O ₄	10.5×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[22]
Fe ₃ O ₄ /Cu	17.1 ×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[23]
Fe ₃ O ₄ @SiO ₂ -Au MNCs	$14.2 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	[24]
Iron Oxide@Ag Core-shell	$14.5 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	[25]
Ag@Fe ₃ O ₄ @C Core shell	17.1 ×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[26]
Cu@SBA-15@CoFe ₂ O ₄	$18.3 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	[27]
10%Cu/SBA-15	$8.3 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	[28]
CoFe ₂ O ₄ /PPy/Pd	13.2×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[29]
Fe ₃ O ₄ /graphene/Pt	20.0×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[30]
Fe ₃ O ₄ /graphene/Pd	61.0×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[30]
Au/graphene hydrogel	3.17×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[31]
Ni-Ag@RGO	89×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[32]
Ni-RGO	1.8×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[33]
PtNi nanosnowflakes/RGO	2.17×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[34]
Ag-Au/rGO	3.47×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[35]
CuO _{0.05} -rGO	231×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[36]
2.5Ru@SBA-15	13.5×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[37]

96CuFe ₂ O ₄ -4RGO	$17.2 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	This work
CuFe ₂ O ₄	$4.2 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	This work
NiFe ₂ O ₄	1.9×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[43]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	$14.1 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$	[43]
98BiFeO ₃ -2RGO	12.0×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[42]
50Ni _{0.8} Zn _{0.2} Fe ₂ O ₄ -50RGO	12.2×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[41]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	120.0×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[40]
Ag@mTiO ₂ @CoFe ₂ O ₄	18.0×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[39]
CuO@mTiO ₂ @CoFe ₂ O ₄	12.0×10 ⁻³ s ⁻¹	[38]



Fig. S12 Gas chromatography analysis of progress of $96CuFe_2O_4$ -4RGO catalyzed styrene epoxidation reaction with time.

 Table S7 Comparison of catalytic efficiency of different reported catalysts for the epoxidation

 reaction of styrene.

Catalyst	Styrene Conversion/ Yield (%)	Selectivity of Styrene Oxide formation (%)	Reference
Ag@m-TiO2@CoFe ₂ O ₄	98	94	[39]
98BiFeO ₃ -2RGO	79	90	[42]
Ag-Fe ₃ O ₄	100	84	[44]
Au(1wt.%)/BaTNT	60	80	[45]
CuO@mTiO2@CoFe ₂ O ₄	98	77	[46]
Ag/4A Zeolite	80	89	[47]
TiO ₂ -Ag	83	66	[48]
CuO/nanotubes-450	94	46	[49]
CuO-1	100	44	[50]

Cu-S-SBA-15	84	15	[51]
Ag-Cu/Cu ₂ O CNFs	99	41	[52]
Fe ₃ O ₄ @SiO ₂ -NH ₂ -Cu	85	51	[53]
Au/L-Fe ₃ O ₄	76	70	[54]
Fe ₃ O ₄	43	74	[54]
Fe ₂ O ₃	17	60	[55]
$Ag-Ni_{0.81}Fe_{2.19}O_4$	69	84	[56]
$Ag-Zn_{0.60}Fe_{2.40}O_4$	18	67	[56]
$Mg_{0.4}Fe_{2.6}O_4$	32	4	[57]
$Sr_{0.2}Ca_{0.8}Fe_2O_4$	49	95	[58]
$Ce_{0.3}Co_{0.7}Fe_2O_4$	90	-	[59]
$Mg_{0.5}Cu_{0.5}Fe_2O_4$	21	-	[60]
$Ni_{0.5}Zn_{0.5}Fe_2O_4$	30	-	[61]
NiFe ₂ O ₄	31	-	[61]
ZnFe ₂ O ₄	26	-	[61]
CaFe ₂ O ₄	38	-	[62]
SrFe ₂ O ₄	51	-	[63]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	85	37	This work
96CuFe ₂ O ₄ -4RGO	90	65	This work



Fig. S13 (a) Magnetic separation of catalyst by applying a magnet externally after completion of the reaction and (b) Reusability of the catalyst for reduction of 4-NP.



Fig. S14 (a) Magnetic separation of catalyst by applying a magnet externally after completion of the reaction and (b) Reusability of the catalyst for styrene epoxidation reaction.



Fig. S15 (a) XRD and (b) TEM micrograph of the recycled 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO catalyst.



Fig. S16 Cyclic voltammetry curves of (a) $CuFe_2O_4$ and (b) $96CuFe_2O_4$ -4RGO in 3 M KOH at different scanning rates (10–100 mV s⁻¹). (c) Randles-Sevcik plot for $CuFe_2O_4$ and $96CuFe_2O_4$ -4RGO nanocomposite in 3 M KOH.



Fig.17 Galvanostatic charge-discharge curves of (a) pure $CuFe_2O_4$ and (b) $96CuFe_2O_4$ -4RGO electrodes at different current densities (2 to10 A g⁻¹) in 3 M KOH.



Fig. S18 Galvanostatic charge-discharge curves of RGO electrodes at different current densities (2 to 10 A g⁻¹) in 3 M KOH.



Fig. S19 FESEM micrograph of RGO.



Fig. S20 Cyclic voltammetry curves of (a) $96CuFe_2O_4-4RGO$ electrode in 3 M KOH + 0.1 M $K_4[Fe(CN)_6]$. at different scanning rates (10-100 mV s⁻¹). (b) Randles–Sevcik plots of the $96CuFe_2O_4-4RGO$ nanocomposite in 3 M KOH, and 3 M KOH + 0.1 M $K_4[Fe(CN)_6]$.



Fig. S21 Galvanostatic charge–discharge profile of $96CuFe_2O_4$ -4RGO electrode in 3 M KOH + 0.1 M K₄[Fe(CN)₆] with changing current density from 2 to 10 A g⁻¹.



Fig. S22. (a) Cyclic voltammetry curves at different scan rates (10-100 mV s⁻¹) and (b) galvanostatic charge–discharge curves with increasing current densities from 2 to 10 A g⁻¹ of a 96CuFe₂O₄-4RGO electrode in 3 M KOH + 0.1 M K₄[Fe(CN)₆] in a two-electrode system.

Material	Specific capacitance (F g ⁻¹)	Current Density (A g ⁻¹)	Electrolyte	Power Density (W kg ⁻¹)	Energy Density (Wh kg ⁻¹)	Reference
Graphene-NiFe ₂ O ₄	345	1	1 M Na ₂ SO ₄	-	-	[64]
ZnFe ₂ O ₄ /NRG	244	0.5	1 M KOH	3000	6.7	[65]
Fe ₃ O ₄ @carbon nanosheet	586	0.5	PVA-KOH	351	18.3	[66]
MnFe ₂ O ₄ /Graphene	120	0.1	(PVA)- H ₂ SO ₄ gel	400	5.0	[67]
Cobalt Ferrite/Graphene/	767.7	0.1	1 M KOH	178.2	79.7	[68]
Polyaniline						
Manganese ferrite/Graphene/	307.2	0.1	1 М КОН	-	13.5	[69]
Polyaniline						
3D Fe ₃ O ₄ /rGO hybrids	455	3.6	2 М КОН	2740	80.9	[70]
Mg-Ferrite rose nano flower	240	20m Vs ⁻¹	3 М КОН	-	-	[71]
ZnFe ₂ O ₄ -CNT	217 mAh g ⁻¹	5 mV s ⁻¹	1 M NaOH	377.86	12.80	[72]
MnCoFeO ₄	675	1 mVs ⁻¹	6 M KOH	337.50	18.85	[73]
$Ni_{0.8}Zn_{0.2}Al_{0.1}Fe_{1.9}$ O ₄ /rGO	136.91	1	6 M KOH	-	16.80	[74]
MoO ₂ / NiFe ₂ O ₄	2105 mAh g ⁻¹	4	3 М КОН	-	-	[75]

 Table S8 Comparison for different ferrite and ferrite-RGO based composite for supercapacitor application.

96CuFe ₂ O ₄ -4RGO	797	2	3 M KOH + 0.1 M K4[Fe(CN)6]	380	16	This work
Pure CuFe ₂ O ₄	83	2	3 М КОН	460	2.4	This work
CuFe ₂ O ₄ -GN	576.6	1	3 М КОН	1100	15.8	[82]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	81.5	1	3 М КОН	1130	1.4	[82]
CuFe ₂ O ₄ -Fe ₂ O ₃	638.24	10 mV s ⁻¹	1 M H ₂ SO ₄			[81]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	48.77	10 mV s ⁻¹	1 M H ₂ SO ₄	-	-	[81]
CuFe ₂ O ₄ film	5.7	0.3µAcm ⁻²	1 M NaOH	-	-	[80]
CuFe ₂ O ₄ fiber	28	0.5	1 M KOH	-	-	[79]
CuFe ₂ O ₄ nanosphere	334	0.6	1 M KOH	-	-	[78]
CuFe ₂ O ₄ nanowires/CNT	267		1 M KCl	1880.1	62.67	[77]
CuFe ₂ O ₄	47		1 M KCl	1985.40	11.03	[77]
98BiFeO ₃ -2RGO	928.43	5	3 M KOH + 0.1 M K ₄ [Fe(CN) ₆]	950	18.62	[76]

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