

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

PRODUCTION PROCESS OF POLYPHENYLENE ETHER

A process for producing a polyphenylene ether, which comprises: contacting, with an aqueous solution of a chelating agent, a polyphenylene ether solution obtained by polymerization in a non-water-soluble polymerization solvent for a polyphenylene ether in the presence of a catalyst, to terminate the polymerization and deactivating the catalyst; and adding a water-soluble poor solvent for the polyphenylene ether to precipitate the polyphenylene ether; and recovering the thus precipitated polyphenylene ether, wherein (a) the contact with the chelating agent aqueous solution is carried out by holding the polyphenylene ether solution and the chelating agent aqueous solution at a temperature of from 50 to 120°C for 10 to 180 minutes, wherein (b) a mixture remaining after the recovery of the polyphenylene ether, which contains the non-water-soluble polymerization solvent and water-soluble poor solvent, is brought into contact with water to extract the water-soluble poor solvent, and a water phase containing the thus extracted water-soluble poor solvent is recovered by separation, and wherein (c) the water-soluble poor solvent is separated and removed from the water phase by distillation, and the whole or a part of the remaining

water phase is recycled as water to be brought into contact with the mixture, the remaining water phase having a content of a high-boiling-point organic substance of 1 wt.% or less.