



**ISO 16017-1:2000, Indoor, ambient and workplace  
air -- Sampling and analysis of volatile organic  
compounds by sorbent tube/thermal  
desorption/capillary gas chromatography -- Part 1:  
Pumped sampling**

*ISO TC 146/SC 6*

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# ISO 16017-1:2000, Indoor, ambient and workplace air -- Sampling and analysis of volatile organic compounds by sorbent tube/thermal desorption/capillary gas chromatography -- Part 1: Pumped sampling

ISO TC 146/SC 6

## ISO 16017-1:2000, Indoor, ambient and workplace air -- Sampling and analysis of volatile organic compounds by sorbent tube/thermal desorption/capillary gas chromatography -- Part 1: Pumped sampling ISO TC 146/SC 6

This part of ISO 16017 gives general guidance for the sampling and analysis of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in air. It is applicable to ambient, indoor and workplace atmospheres and the assessment of emissions from materials in small- or full-scale test chambers. This part of ISO 16017 is appropriate for a wide range of VOCs, including hydrocarbons, halogenated hydrocarbons, esters, glycol ethers, ketones and alcohols. A number of sorbents<sup>1)</sup> are recommended for the sampling of these VOCs, each sorbent having a different range of applicability. Very polar compounds will generally require derivatization, very low boiling compounds will only be partially retained by the sorbents, depending on ambient temperature, and can only be estimated qualitatively. Semi-volatile compounds will be fully retained by the sorbents, but may only be partially recovered. Compounds for which this part of ISO 16017 has been tested are given in tables. This part of ISO 16017 may be applicable to compounds not listed, but in these cases it is advisable to use a back-up tube containing the same or a stronger sorbent. This part of ISO 16017 is applicable to the measurement of airborne vapours of VOCs in a concentration range of approximately 0,5 µg/ m<sup>3</sup> to 100 mg/m<sup>3</sup> individual compound. The upper limit of the useful range is set by the sorptive capacity of the sorbent used and by the linear dynamic range of the gas chromatograph column and detector or by the sample-splitting capability of the analytical instrumentation used. The sorptive capacity is measured as a breakthrough volume of air, which determines the maximum air volume that shall not be exceeded when sampling. The lower limit of the useful range depends on the noise level of the detector and on blank levels of analyte and/or interfering artefacts on the sorbent tubes. Artefacts are typically sub-nanogram for well-conditioned Tenax GR and carbonaceous sorbents such as Carbopack/Carbotrap type materials, carbonized molecular sieves and molecular sieves such as Sphero carb, or pure charcoal; at low nanogram levels for Tenax TA and at 5 ng to 50 ng levels for other porous polymers such as Chromosorbs and Porapak. Sensitivity is typically limited to 0,5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for 10-litre air samples with this latter group of sorbents because of their inherent high background. The procedure specified in this part of ISO 16017 is applicable to low flowrate personal sampling pumps and gives a time-weighted average result. It is not applicable to the measurement of instantaneous or short-term fluctuations in concentration.<sup>1)</sup> The sorbents listed in annex C and elsewhere in this International Standard are those known to perform as specified under this part of ISO 16017. Each sorbent or product that is identified by a trademarked name is unique and has a sole manufacturer; however, they are widely available from many different suppliers. This information is given for the convenience of users of this part of ISO 16017 and does not constitute an endorsement by ISO of the product named. Equivalent products may be used if they can be shown to lead to the same results.

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