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**Plastics — Determination of dynamic  
mechanical properties —**

**Part 3:**

Flexural vibration — Resonance-curve method

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*Plastiques — Détermination des propriétés mécaniques dynamiques —  
Partie 3: Vibration en flexion — Méthode en résonance*



Reference number  
ISO 6721-3:1994(E)

## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO 6721-3 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 61, *Plastics*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Mechanical properties*.

Together with ISO 6721-1, it ~~replaces~~ replaces ISO 6721:1983, which has been technically revised.

ISO 6721 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Plastics — Determination of dynamic mechanical properties*:

- Part 1: *General principles*
- Part 2: *Torsion-pendulum method*
- Part 3: *Flexural vibration — Resonance-curve method*
- Part 4: *Tensile vibration — Non-resonance method*
- Part 5: *Flexural vibration — Non-resonance method*
- Part 6: *Shear vibration — Non-resonance method*
- Part 7: *Torsional vibration — Non-resonance method*

Annexes A and B of this part of ISO 6721 are for information only.

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# Plastics — Determination of dynamic mechanical properties —

## Part 3: Flexural vibration — Resonance-curve method

### 1 Scope

This part of ISO 6721 specifies a bending-vibration method based upon resonance curves for determining the flexural complex modulus  $E_f^*$  of homogeneous plastics and the damping properties of laminated plastics intended for acoustic insulation, for example systems consisting of a metal sheet coated with a damping plastic layer, or sandwich systems consisting of two sheet-metal layers with an intermediate plastic layer. For many purposes, it is useful to determine these properties as a function of temperature and frequency.

### 2 Normative reference

The following standard contains provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this part of ISO 6721. At the time of publication, the edition indicated was valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this part of ISO 6721 are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the standard indicated below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 6721-1:1994, *Plastics — Determination of dynamic mechanical properties — Part 1: General principles*.

### 3 Definitions

See ISO 6721-1:1994, clause 3.

NOTE 1 As stated in ISO 6721-1, frequencies derived from resonance curves based on deformation-rate amplitude measurements can be exactly related to dynamic properties. For the recommended range of the loss factor of this part of the International Standard, i.e.  $\tan \delta < 0,1$ , resonance curves based upon deformation amplitudes can also be used. For highly damping materials, see ISO 6721-1:1994, annex A.

### 4 Principle

A specimen is submitted to forced bending vibrations in the frequency range between about 10 Hz and 1 000 Hz. The resonance curve (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.11) is determined and, from the curve obtained, the flexural storage modulus  $E_f'$  (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.2) is calculated in the range above 0,5 MPa and the loss factor given by  $\tan \delta = E_f''/E_f'$  (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.6) is calculated in the range between about  $10^{-2}$  and  $10^{-1}$  (see note 1). The test frequency can be varied by making measurements at more than one vibrational order. The measurement range for the flexural loss modulus  $E_f''$  (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.3) is determined by that of the loss factor and by the value of the storage modulus.

The mode of oscillation used is designated oscillation mode III (see ISO 6721-1:1994, table 2) and the type of modulus measured is designated  $E_f$  (see ISO 6721-1:1994, table 3).

The test is performed on rectangular bars, either mounted vertically with the upper end clamped and the other end free (method A) or suspended horizontally by fine fibres at vibrational nodes (method B) (see figure 1). Method A is suitable for testing specimens

of most types of plastic, including relatively soft materials, whereas method B is particularly suitable for testing rigid (i.e. dimensionally stable) specimens, for example sheet metal covered by a plastic layer for damping purposes.

## 5 Test apparatus

### 5.1 General

The apparatus consists of devices for clamping (method A) or suspending (method B) the specimen, electronic devices (frequency generator and recording device) for exciting the specimen to forced bending vibration and for measuring the frequency as well as the velocity amplitude of the specimen (see note 1). For excitation and detection of the vibrations two electromagnetic transducers are situated near the ends of the specimen. The specimen, the clamping or supporting device and the electromagnetic transducers are enclosed in a temperature-controlled chamber (see figure 1).

### 5.2 Clamps or suspension fibres

If the specimen is clamped at one end, the clamp shall be designed to hold the upper end of the specimen securely and tightly [see figure 1 a)]. It shall be constructed so that no additional damping of the system occurs.

There are two causes of additional damping:

- Friction between the test specimen and the clamp: This can be detected by stimulating freely decaying oscillations of the relevant vibrational order. As explained in ISO 6721-1:1994, annex B, the type of decay is indicative of different types of deviation from linear viscoelastic behaviour.
- Vibration of the clamp: The clamp shall be rigidly mounted on a heavy mass, which acts as a counterweight to the oscillating test specimen. This requires a heavy rigid stand within the temperature-controlled chamber (see figure 1).

If the specimen is tested in the horizontal position, it shall be supported by two fine fibres at vibrational nodes (see 9.3.2).

### 5.3 Exciter and detector

The frequency generator shall be capable of exciting the specimen with the aid of the electromagnetic transducer to oscillations within the frequency range of 10 Hz to 1 000 Hz with a constant force amplitude.

The detector shall be capable of measuring the deformation or deformation-rate amplitude (see note 1) of the specimen and the frequency of the oscillation, thereby permitting the recording of the resonance curve (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.11 and annex A).

The amplitude of the exciter and the sensitivity of the detector shall not vary with frequency by more than 0,5 % within the range of a single-resonance peak, i.e. for any 10 % variation of the frequency.

A tracking filter shall be used to minimize noise at the detector. Frequencies shall be measured with a resolution of at least 0,1 % (see 11.2).

Two small, thin steel plates shall be adhesively bonded at the ends of the specimen to permit the excitation and detection of the vibrations by means of suitable electromagnetic transducers (see 6.2).

### 5.4 Temperature-controlled enclosure

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 5.3.

### 5.5 Gas supply

Supply of air or other suitable inert gas for purging purposes.

### 5.6 Temperature-measurement device

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 5.5.

### 5.7 Devices for measuring test specimen dimensions and density

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 5.6.

The balance used for measuring the mass of the specimen shall be capable of weighing to 1 mg.

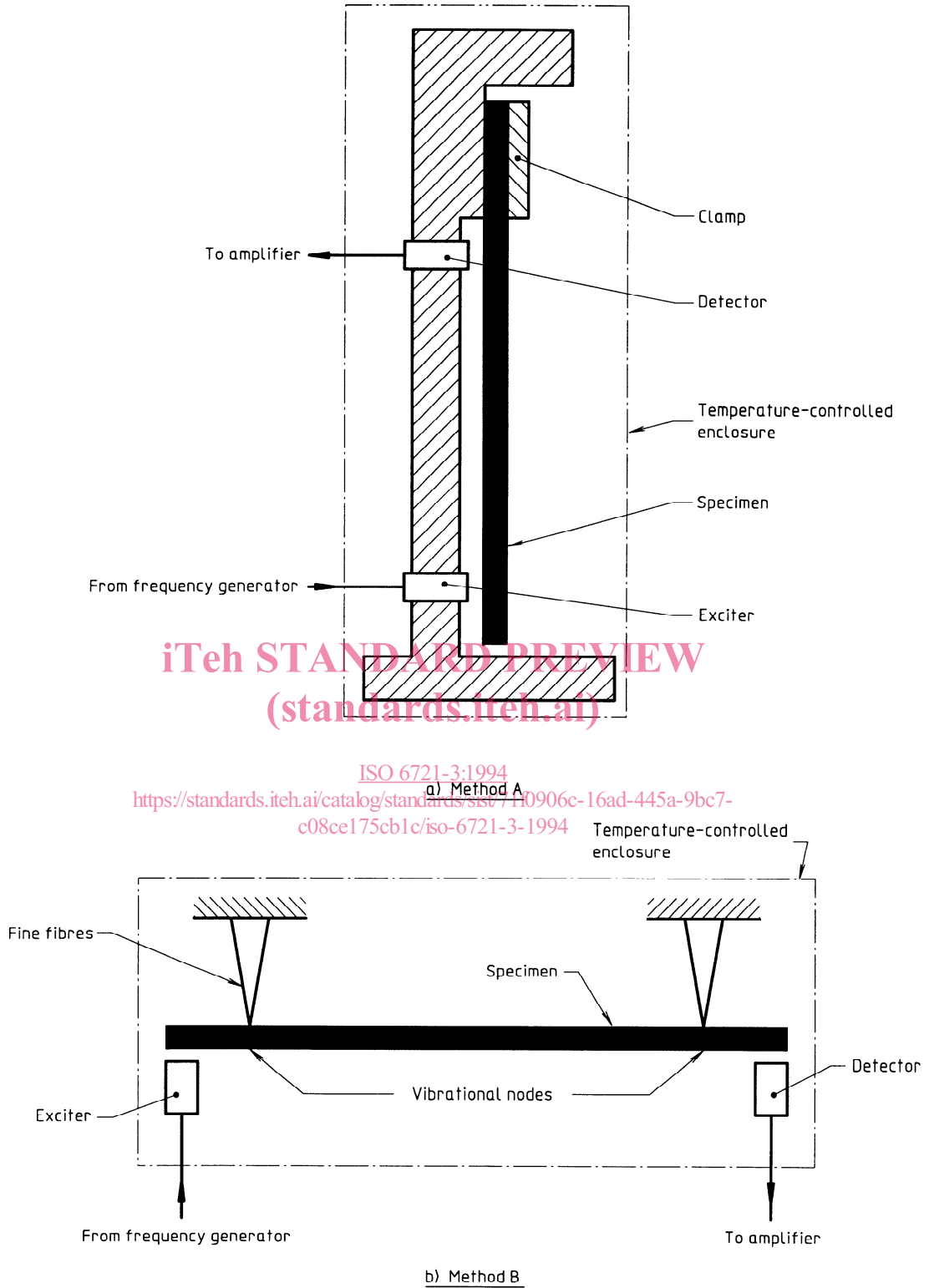


Figure 1 — Schematic diagrams of test apparatus for methods A and B

## 6 Test specimens

See ISO 6721-1:1994, clause 6.

### 6.1 Shape and dimensions

Specimens shall be rectangular bars or strips thick enough to give sufficient bending stiffness, which is critical for the resonance frequency. On the other hand, the thickness shall be sufficiently small when compared to the wavelength of the bending vibration. The specimen thickness shall also be limited to avoid effects due to shear deformation and rotatory inertia if accurate values of  $E'$  are required. Length-to-thickness ratios of less than 50 shall be avoided if values of  $E'$  are required to be accurate to within  $\pm 5\%$ , from measurements up to the sixth order of homogeneous, isotropic specimens.

The thickness of the layers of a multilayer system will depend on the purpose for which the system was designed. When comparing various systems by the bending-vibration test, the preferred ratio of the mass of the plastic layer to the mass of the basic sheet material is 1:5.

The width of the specimens shall be less than one-half of the wavelength used in order to avoid lateral resonance vibrations. A width of 10 mm should be suitable in most cases.

The length of the specimens depends on the desired frequency. For specimens clamped at one end, the length shall be sufficiently large to avoid the clamp influencing the vibration significantly. Usually a free length of 180 mm will be suitable. If the specimen is not clamped, its length shall be 150 mm.

### 6.2 Preparation

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 6.2.

Small, thin, light steel plates shall be adhesively bonded to the specimens near their ends to allow excitation and detection of the vibrations by means of electromagnetic transducers. To avoid errors in  $E'$  greater than 4 %, the ratio of the added mass to the specimen mass shall not exceed 1 %. To avoid the steel plates causing additional stiffness, they shall not extend along more than 2 % of the length of the specimen. The distance between the steel plates shall be large enough to avoid cross-talk between exciter and detector.

Multilayer specimens shall be fabricated with the thickness and by the production techniques to be used in the projected end-use. For example, for a

plastic material on steel sheet, the plastic may be applied to the metal by spraying, as a mastic or as an adhesively bonded sheet.

## 7 Number

See ISO 6721-1:1994, clause 7.

## 8 Conditioning

See ISO 6721-1:1994, clause 8.

## 9 Procedure

### 9.1 Test atmosphere

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 9.1.

### 9.2 Measurement of specimen cross-section and density

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 9.2.

Determine the density of the specimen (i.e. the mass of the free length per unit volume) to  $\pm 0,5\%$ .

### 9.3 Mounting the test specimens and adjustment of the transducers

#### 9.3.1 Method A

Clamp the specimen so that the clamping force is high enough to avoid additional damping from friction between the specimen and the clamp (see 5.2). Measure the free length  $L$  of the specimen to  $\pm 0,5\%$ .

#### 9.3.2 Method B

Measure the length of the specimen to  $\pm 0,2\%$ . Calculate the distance  $L_i$  of the first nodes from the ends of the specimen, using one of the following two equations:

$$L_i/l = 0,224 \quad \text{for } i = 1 \quad \dots (1)$$

$$L_i/l = 0,660/(2i + 1) \quad \text{for } i > 1 \quad \dots (2)$$

where

$l$  is the length of the specimen;

$i$  is the vibrational order.

Mount the specimen by fine, preferably non-metallic, fibres at the calculated positions of the vibrational nodes.

**9.3.3 Adjustment of the transducers**

After clamping or supporting the specimen, adjust the detector and exciter transducers so that they are just far enough from the specimen to avoid any noticeable effect on the resonance frequency. With the usual test apparatus, the recommended distance is greater than 3 mm for  $i = 1$ . Gaps of 1 mm or less can be used with higher orders.

**9.4 Varying the temperature**

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 9.4.

**9.5 Varying the frequency**

See ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 9.5.

**9.6 Recording the resonance curve**

Excite the specimen using the frequency generator and determine the amplitude (or the effective value) of the deformation or deformation rate. By varying the frequency, record the resonance curve.

Measure the amplitude to  $\pm 0,5\%$ , the resonance frequencies to  $\pm 1\%$  and the width of the resonance peaks with a frequency resolution of at least  $\pm 1\%$ , corresponding to the value of the width (see (11.2)). Usually, it is possible to measure the resonance curve in the range from the first to the sixth or seventh order of the vibration.

When a clamped specimen is used (method A), the first order is the one mostly affected by damping in the clamp, and the amplitudes of the vibrations of higher orders decrease rapidly with frequency. Therefore, intermediate orders shall be chosen for the measurements.

Ensure that the type of amplitude decay measured does not include either friction between moving and fixed parts of the apparatus or non-linear behaviour of the materials under test (see ISO 6721-1:1994, annex B).

**10 Expression of results**

**10.1 Symbols**

- $E'_f$  flexural storage modulus, expressed in pascals
- $E''_f$  flexural loss modulus, expressed in pascals
- $\tan \delta_f$  flexural loss factor (dimensionless number)
- $\rho$  specimen density, expressed in kilograms per cubic metre

- $l$  length of the specimen (method B), expressed in metres
- $L$  free length of the specimen (method A), expressed in metres
- $h$  thickness of the specimen, expressed in metres
- $f$  frequency of the oscillation, expressed in hertz
- $i$  order of the vibration
- $f_{ri}$  resonance frequency at the order  $i$  of the vibration (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.12), expressed in hertz
- $\Delta f_i$  width of  $i$ th order resonance peak (see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.13), expressed in hertz
- $k_i^2$  numerical factor given by one of the following equations:

For method A:

$$k_1^2 = 3,52 \quad \text{for } i = 1 \quad \dots (3)$$

$$k_2^2 = 22,0 \quad \text{for } i = 2 \quad \dots (4)$$

$$k_i^2 = (i - 1/2)^2 \pi^2 \quad \text{for } i > 2 \quad \dots (5)$$

For method B:

$$k_1^2 = 22,4 \quad \text{for } i = 1 \quad \dots (6)$$

$$k_2^2 = 61,7 \quad \text{for } i = 2 \quad \dots (7)$$

$$k_i^2 = (i + 1/2)^2 \pi^2 \quad \text{for } i > 2 \quad \dots (8)$$

**10.2 Calculation of flexural storage modulus**

$E'_f$

The flexural storage modulus  $E'_f$  is given by the equation

$$E'_f = [4\pi(3\rho)^{1/2}l^2/h]^2 (f_{ri}/k_i^2)^2 \quad \dots (9)$$

**10.3 Calculation of flexural loss factor  $\tan \delta_f$**

The flexural loss factor  $\tan \delta_f$  shall be calculated from the width  $\Delta f_i$  of the resonance peak and the natural frequency  $f_{ri}$  by the following equation:

$$\tan \delta_f = \Delta f_i / f_{ri} \quad \dots (10)$$

(see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.13).

NOTE 2 As defined in ISO 6721-1:1994, subclause 3.13, the width  $\Delta f_i$  of any peak in the resonance curve is based

upon an attenuation  $a$  of the deformation-rate amplitude of  $2^{1/2}$ . Highly damping materials, however, often show resonance peaks smaller than this attenuation. In this case, with reduced precision, one can try to analyse the resonance curves using a lower attenuation  $a$  nearer to the value 1 or using a curve-fitting process, using the equations given in ISO 6721-1:1994, annex A.

Alternatively, the mode of oscillation may be changed from mode number III to IV (see ISO 6721-1:1994, table 2). Switching off the exciter at the natural frequency of the relevant vibrational order, freely decaying oscillations are stimulated and may be analysed according to ISO 6721-1:1994, subclauses 3.8 to 3.10. This measuring principle may also be useful in the case of very weakly damping materials with extremely small resonance-peak widths (see 11.2).

#### 10.4 Calculation of flexural loss modulus $E''_f$

The flexural loss modulus  $E''_f$  can be calculated from the flexural storage modulus  $E'_f$  and the flexural loss factor ( $\tan \delta_f$ ) using the equation

$$E''_f = E'_f \tan \delta_f \quad \dots (11)$$

(see ISO 6721-1:1994, subclauses 3.3 and 3.6).

#### 10.5 Plotting the complex modulus as a function of temperature

If the complex modulus is measured as a function of temperature, not only  $E'_f$  and  $E''_f$ , but also the frequency at which they are measured, shall be plotted as a function of temperature, because the resonance frequency of a given plastic specimen is shifted to lower values as the storage modulus decreases with increasing temperature. However, the values of the components which are temperature-dependent at constant frequency can be obtained by interpolation if curves have been plotted at several different frequencies (i.e. for several different vibrational orders).

## 11 Precision

### 11.1 Storage modulus

If all instructions regarding the determination of each individual parameter in equation (9) have been fol-

lowed (see 5.3, 9.2, 9.3.1, 9.3.2 and 9.6), the precision of measurement of  $E'_f$  will be between  $\pm 3\%$  and  $\pm 5\%$  up to vibrational order 4. For higher-order vibrational modes, it becomes necessary to consider the effect of shear deformation. In the case of laminated systems,  $E'_f$  represents an average modulus for the system (the flexural mean).

### 11.2 Loss factor

The precision of measurement of the loss factor ( $\tan \delta_f$ ) depends on its value and the frequency resolution of the measuring equipment. The relationship between the coefficient of variation  $V_f$  of the frequency measurement and the coefficient of variation  $V_\delta$  of the loss factor is given by the equation

$$V_\delta = \sqrt{2} V_f \tan \delta_f \quad \dots (12)$$

Using a value of 0,1 % for  $V_f$  (see 9.6), the coefficient of variation  $V_\delta$  of the loss factor is 1,4 % when  $\tan \delta_f = 0,1$  and 14 % when  $\tan \delta_f = 0,01$ . For precise measurements of  $\tan \delta_f$  and thus of  $E''_f$  [see equation (11)], the frequency resolution must be higher than that necessary for the measurement of  $E'_f$ .

For small values of the loss factor, freely decaying vibrations stimulated at the resonance frequencies shall be used.

### 11.3 Precision of the methods

The precision of the two methods described in this part of ISO 6721 is not known because inter-laboratory data are not available. When inter-laboratory data are obtained, a precision statement will be added at the next revision (see also annex A).

## 12 Test report

The test report shall include the following information:

- a) a reference to this part of ISO 6721, plus the method used (A or B), e.g. ISO 6721-3A;
- b) to m): see ISO 6721-1:1994, clause 12, items b) to m).



## Annex A (informative)

### Round-robin testing

During the preparation of the original version of this International Standard, ISO 6721:1983, an international round-robin test was performed in 1976. Four countries (France, Japan, Germany and Italy) participated in this test. The thermoplastics examined were

PMMA, PVC and HDPE. The results of the round-robin test are shown in figures A.1 to A.3.

The reproducibility was found to be  $\pm 5\%$  for  $E'_f$  and  $\pm 3 \times 10^{-3}$  for  $\tan \delta_f$ .

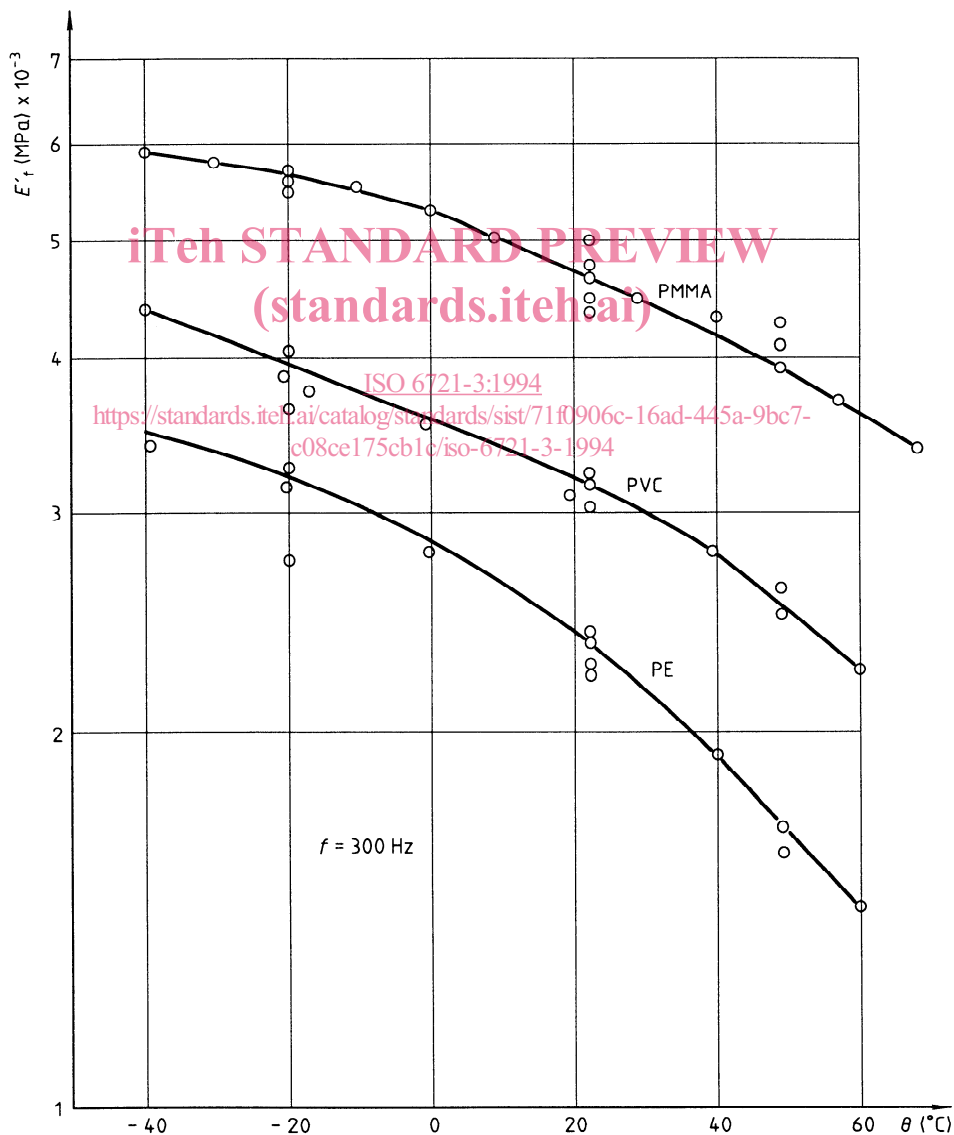


Figure A.1 — Real part  $E'_f$  of the flexural complex modulus versus temperature for poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), poly(vinyl chloride) (PVC) and polyethylene (PE), measured at 300 Hz