

INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD

**ISO/IEC**  
**13421**

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**Information technology — Data  
interchange on 12,7 mm, 48-track magnetic  
tape cartridges — DLT 1 format**

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*Technologies de l'information — Échange de données sur cartouches  
pour bandes magnétiques de 12,7 mm, 48 pistes — Format DLT 1*

ISO/IEC 13421:1993

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Reference number  
ISO/IEC 13421:1993(E)

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee ISO/IEC JTC 1. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75% of the national bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO/IEC 13421 was prepared by the European Computer Manufacturers Association (ECMA) (as Standard ECMA-182) and was adopted, under a special "fast-track procedure", by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, in parallel with its approval by national bodies of ISO and IEC.

Annexes A to E form an integral part of this International Standard. Annexes F to J are for information only.

## Patents

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During the preparation of the ECMA standard, information was gathered on patents upon which application of the standard might depend. Relevant patents were identified as belonging to Digital Equipment Corporation. However, neither ECMA nor ISO/IEC can give authoritative or comprehensive information about evidence, validity or scope of patent and like rights. The patent holders have stated that licences will be granted under reasonable and non-discriminatory terms. Communications on this subject should be addressed to

Digital Equipment Corporation  
334 South Street  
Shrewsbury  
Massachusetts 01545-4112  
USA



**Introduction**

International Standards ISO 9661 and ISO/IEC 11559 specify data interchange on 12,7 mm, 18-track magnetic tape cartridges.

International Standard 13421 concerns a cartridge of a type different from that of those International Standards. Whilst the magnetic tape is also 12,7 mm wide, it is recorded on 48 physical tracks. Also the format is different from that of these previous International Standards. It is characterized by the fact that the physical tracks, recorded and read in pairs, constitute two groups, the first recorded and read in forward direction, the second in reverse direction.

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## Information technology — Data interchange on 12,7 mm, 48-track magnetic tape cartridges — DLT 1 format

### Section 1 - General

#### 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies the physical and magnetic characteristics of a 12,7 mm wide, 48-track magnetic tape cartridge, to enable interchangeability of such cartridges. It also specifies the quality of the recorded signals, a format - called Digital Linear Tape 1 (DLT 1) - and a recording method. Together with a labelling standard, e.g. ISO 1001, it allows full data interchange by means of such magnetic tape cartridges.

#### 2 Conformance

##### 2.1 Magnetic tape cartridges

A magnetic tape cartridge shall be in conformance with this International Standard if it satisfies all mandatory requirements of this International Standard. The tape requirements shall be satisfied throughout the extent of the tape.

##### 2.2 Generating systems

A system generating a magnetic tape cartridge for interchange shall be entitled to claim conformance with this International Standard if all the recordings that it makes on a tape according to 2.1 meet the mandatory requirements of this International Standard.

##### 2.3 Receiving systems

A system receiving a magnetic tape cartridge for interchange shall be entitled to claim conformance with this International Standard if it is able to handle any recording made on a tape according to 2.1.

#### 3 Normative references

The following standards contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the standards listed below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid international standards.

ISO 1001:1986 *Information processing - File structure and labelling of magnetic tapes for information interchange.*

ISO 1302:1992 *Technical drawings - Method of indicating surface texture.*

#### 4 Definitions

For the purpose of this International Standard, the following definitions apply.

## ISO/IEC 13421:1993 (E)

- 4.1 Average Signal Amplitude:** The average peak-to-peak value of the output signal from the read head at the physical recording density of 1 674 ftpmm measured over a minimum length of track of 25,4 mm, exclusive of missing pulses.
- 4.2 azimuth:** The angular deviation, in minutes of arc, of the mean flux transition line of the recording made on a track from the line normal to the Reference Edge.
- 4.3 back surface:** The surface of the tape opposite the magnetic coating which is used to record data.
- 4.4 Beginning-Of-Tape marker (BOT):** A hole punched on the centreline of the tape towards the end nearest to the leader.
- 4.5 byte:** An ordered set of bits acted upon as a unit.
- NOTE 1 - In this International Standard, all bytes are 8-bit bytes.
- 4.6 cartridge:** A case containing a single supply reel of 12,7 mm wide magnetic tape with a leader attached at the outer end.
- 4.7 Cyclic Redundancy Check (CRC) character:** A 64-bit character, generated by a mathematical computation, used for error detection.
- 4.8 Early Warning (EW):** A signal generated by the drive indicating the approaching end of the recording area.
- 4.9 Error-Detecting Code (EDC):** A mathematical computation yielding check bytes used for error detection.
- 4.10 End-Of-Tape marker (EOT):** A hole punched on the centreline of the tape towards the end farthest from the leader.
- 4.11 Entity:** A group of ten Logical Blocks treated as a logical unit and recorded on a logical track.
- 4.12 Error-Correcting Code (ECC):** A mathematical computation yielding check bytes used for the correction of errors detected by the CRC and the EDC.
- 4.13 flux transition position:** The point which exhibits the maximum free-space flux density normal to the tape surface.
- 4.14 flux transition spacing:** The distance on the magnetic tape between successive flux transitions.
- 4.15 Logical Block:** The two physical blocks simultaneously written on, or read from, the two physical tracks of a logical track.
- 4.16 logical track:** A pair of physical tracks that are written or read simultaneously.
- 4.17 magnetic tape:** A tape that accepts and retains magnetic signals intended for input, output, and storage purposes on computers and associated equipment.

**4.18 Master Standard Reference Tape:** A tape selected as the standard for reference field, signal amplitude, resolution, peakshift, and overwrite characteristics.

NOTE 2 - The Master Standard Reference Tape has been established by Digital Equipment Corporation.

**4.19 object:** A Record or a Tape Mark Block.

**4.20 physical block:** A set of contiguous bytes recorded on a physical track and considered as a unit.

**4.21 physical recording density:** The number of recorded flux transitions per unit length of track, expressed in flux transitions per millimetre (ftpmmm).

**4.22 physical track:** A longitudinal area on the tape along which a series of magnetic signals can be recorded.

**4.23 Record:** A collection of User Bytes, the number of which is determined by the host.

**4.24 Reference Edge:** The bottom edge of the tape when viewing the magnetic coating of the tape with the BOT to the left and the EOT to the right of the observer.

**4.25 Reference Field:** The Typical Field of the Master Standard Reference Tape.

**4.26 Secondary Standard Reference Tape:** A tape the characteristics of which are known and stated in relation to those of the Master Standard Reference Tape.

NOTE 3 - Secondary Standard Reference Tapes can be ordered under reference SSR1/DLT1 until the year 2003 from Digital Equipment Corporation, Tapes Products Group, 334 South Street, Shrewsbury, Mass. 01545, USA.

It is intended that these be used for calibrating tertiary reference tapes for routine calibration.

**4.27 Standard Reference Amplitude (SRA):** The Average Signal Amplitude from the Master Standard Reference Tape when it is recorded with the Test Recording Current at 1 674 ftpmm.

**4.28 Standard Reference Current:** The current that produces the Reference Field.

**4.29 Test Recording Current:** The current that is 1,1 times the Standard Reference Current.

**4.30 Typical Field:** In the plot of the Average Signal Amplitude against the recording field at the physical recording density of 1674 ftpmm, the minimum field that causes an Average Signal Amplitude equal to 95 % of the maximum Average Signal Amplitude.

## 5 Conventions and notations

### 5.1 Representation of numbers

The following conventions and notations apply in this International Standard, unless otherwise stated.

- In each block and in each field the bytes shall be arranged with Byte 1, the least significant, first. Within each byte the bits shall be arranged with Bit 1, the least significant, first and Bit 8, the most significant bit, last. This order applies to the data, and to the input and output of the error-detecting and error-correcting codes, and to the cyclic redundancy characters.

## ISO/IEC 13421:1993 (E)

- Letters and digits in parentheses represent numbers in hexadecimal notation.
- The setting of bits is denoted by ZERO or ONE.
- Numbers in binary notation and bit patterns are represented by strings of ZEROs and ONES shown with the most significant bit to the left.

### 5.2 Names

The names of basic elements, e.g. specific fields, are written with a capital initial letter.

### 5.3 Acronyms

BOT	Beginning of Tape
CF1	Control Field 1
CF2	Control Field 2
CRC	Cyclic Redundancy Check (character)
ECC	Error-Correcting Code
EDC	Error-Detecting Code
EOD	End of Data
EOT	End of Tape
EOTR	End of Track
EW	Early Warning
FCT1	Forward Calibration Track 1
FCT2	Forward Calibration Track 2
LEOT	Logical End of Tape
MFM	Modified Frequency Modulation
RCT1	Reverse Calibration Track 1
RCT2	Reverse Calibration Track 2
SRA	Standard Reference Amplitude

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## 6 Environment and safety

Unless otherwise stated, the conditions specified below refer to the ambient conditions in the test or computer room and not to those within the tape drive.

### 6.1 Cartridge and tape testing environment

Unless otherwise stated, tests and measurements made on the cartridge and tape to check the requirements of this International Standard shall be carried out under the following conditions:

- temperature: 23 °C ± 2 °C
- relative humidity: 40 % to 60 %
- conditioning before testing: 24 h

### 6.2 Cartridge operating environment

Cartridges used for data interchange shall be capable of operating under the following conditions:

- temperature: 10 °C to 40 °C
- relative humidity: 20 % to 80 %
- wet bulb temperature: 25 °C max.

NOTE 4 - Localized tape temperatures in excess of 49 °C may cause tape damage.

If during storage and/or transportation a cartridge has been exposed to conditions outside the above values, it shall be conditioned before use by exposure to the operating environment for a time equal to, or greater than, the time away from the operating environment up to a maximum of 2 h. There shall be no deposit of moisture on or in the cartridge.

### 6.3 Cartridge storage environment

Cartridges shall be stored under the following conditions:

- temperature: 16 °C to 32 °C
- relative humidity: 20 % to 80 %
- wet bulb temperature: 26 °C max.

Tapes intended for archiving data for one year or more shall be stored under the following conditions:

- temperature: 18 °C to 26 °C
- relative humidity: 20 % to 60 %

The stray magnetic field at any point on the tape shall not exceed 4 000 A/m. There shall be no deposit of moisture on or in the cartridge.

### 6.4 Safety requirements

#### 6.4.1 Safeness

The cartridge and its components shall not constitute any safety or health hazard when used in the intended manner, or through any foreseeable misuse in an information processing system.

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#### 6.4.2 Flammability

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The cartridge and its components shall be made from materials which, if ignited from a match flame, do not continue to burn in a still carbon dioxide atmosphere.

### 6.5 Transportation

This International Standard does not specify parameters for the environment in which cartridges should be transported. Annex F gives some recommendations for transportation.

## Section 2 - Requirements for the unrecorded tape

### 7 Mechanical and electrical requirements

#### 7.1 Material

The tape shall consist of a base material (oriented polyethylene terephthalate film or its equivalent) coated on one surface with a strong yet flexible layer of ferromagnetic material dispersed in a suitable binder. The other surface of the cartridge shall be coated with a non-ferromagnetic conductive coating.

#### 7.2 Tape length

The length of the tape shall be 355 m min. and 365 m max.