
**Rubber — Identification of polymers
— Pyrolytic gas-chromatographic
method using mass-spectrometric
detection**

*Caoutchouc — Identification des polymères — Méthode par
pyrolyse et chromatographie en phase gazeuse avec détection par
spectrométrie de masse*

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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.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 45, *Rubber and rubber products*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Testing and analysis*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 17257:2013), of which it consists a minor revision to correct a grammatical error in the Scope.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Rubber — Identification of polymers — Pyrolytic gas-chromatographic method using mass-spectrometric detection

1 Scope

This document provides a qualitative method for the identification of rubbers by their pyrolysis products using tandem gas-chromatography/mass spectrometry.

The method applies to rubbers in the raw state and to unvulcanized and vulcanized compounds. Compounds can be based on a single rubber or a blend of two or more rubbers. Where the level of a particular rubber in a blend is <10 %, detection and identification can be difficult.

A non-restrictive list of rubbers is given in [Clause 4](#).

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 1407, *Rubber — Determination of solvent extract*

ISO 1629, *Rubber and latices — Nomenclature*

3 Terms and definitions

No terms and definitions are listed in this document.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

4 List of rubbers

The following list is not restrictive.

Rubbers are presented according to ISO 1629.

4.1 Group M

4.1.1 Chloropolyethylene (CM)

4.1.2 Chlorosulfonylpolyethylene (CSM)

4.1.3 Ethylene-propylene copolymer (EPM) and Ethylene-propylene-diene terpolymer (EPDM)

The method cannot distinguish between them.

4.1.4 Fluorocarbon rubber having substituent fluoro, perfluoroalkyl, or perfluoroalkoxy groups on the polymer chain (FKM)

The method cannot distinguish between them.

4.2 Group O

4.2.1 Homopolymer of epichlorhydrin (CO), copolymer of epichlorhydrin-ethylene oxide (ECO), terpolymer of epichlorhydrin-ethylene oxide-allyl glycidyl ether (GECO)

The method cannot distinguish among them.

4.3 Group Q

4.3.1 Polysiloxanes (MQ, VMQ, PVMQ)

The method cannot distinguish MQ and VMQ, but can distinguish PVMQ from the two other polymers.

4.4 Group R

4.4.1 Butadiene rubber (BR)

4.4.2 Chloroprene rubber (CR)

4.4.3 Isobutene-isoprene rubber (IIR), chlorinated IIR (CIIR) and brominated IIR (BIIR)

The method cannot distinguish among them.

4.4.4 Natural rubber (NR) and synthetic isoprene rubber (IR)

The method cannot distinguish between them.

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4.4.5 Acrylonitrile-butadiene rubber (NBR), hydrogenated NBR (HNBR) and carboxylated NBR (XNBR)

The method can only distinguish HNBR from the two other polymers (NBR and XNBR).

4.4.6 Styrene-butadiene rubber (SBR)

The method allows butadiene- α -methylstyrene rubber to be distinguished from styrene-butadiene rubber.

4.5 Rubber blends

In copolymer-homopolymer blends having one common monomer (e.g. SBR/BR, NBR/BR), the technique does not allow the homopolymer to be distinguished.

This is also valid for blends with terpolymers.

5 Principle

5.1 Raw rubbers, or vulcanized or unvulcanized compounds which previously have been solvent extracted, are pyrolysed and the pyrolysate analysed by gas chromatography with mass spectrometric detection.

5.2 The results are interpreted by examining the mass spectra of the specific chromatographic peaks.

6 Reagents

All reagents shall be of an analytical grade.

6.1 **Solvents**, for the extraction according to ISO 1407.

6.2 **Inert carrier gas**.

7 Equipment

7.1 Extraction devices according to ISO 1407.

7.2 The chromatographic equipment consists of three associated parts:

- a) pyrolysis system;
- b) gas chromatograph equipped with chromatographic columns;
- c) mass detector in electronic impact mode.

These elements are connected with an acquisition and data processing system.

A schematic diagram of the equipment is given in [Annex A](#).

7.2.1 Pyrolysis system

Non-volatile polymers are decomposed at elevated temperature to generate volatile products able to be analysed by chromatography. In order to obtain reproducible results of decomposition, the pyrolysis parameters (temperature, time) shall be established separately.

Different types of equipment that give a rapid and reproducible pyrolysis are available. The three most common types are the following:

- platinum filament pyrolyser;
- Curie point pyrolyser;
- micro furnace pyrolyser.

7.2.2 Chromatographic columns

7.2.2.1 General

There are several categories of chromatographic columns available in the market. They are characterized by

- the nature of the material constituting the tube (generally silica covered with a polymer, aluminium or deactivated stainless steel, etc.);
- the column length;
- the column diameter;
- the nature, thickness, and polarity of the stationary phase placed on the internal surface of the capillary tube.

The column shall be chosen by taking into account its efficiency of separation (number of theoretical plates) and the relative polarity of the various compounds generated during rubber pyrolysis.

7.2.2.2 Examples of useful capillary columns

- a) Capillary column in fused silica of 0,32 mm diameter and 30 m, of apolar type. Stationary phase — film of dimethyl polysiloxane, 1 µm thick;
- b) Capillary column in fused silica of 0,32 mm diameter and 30 m, of polar type. Stationary phase — film of polyethylene glycol, 0,5 µm thick.

8 Operating conditions

8.1 General

The reproducibility is guaranteed by checking the conformity of the device and by respecting the procedure.

8.2 Gas chromatograph adjustment

Adjust the various controls of the gas chromatograph according to the retained operating conditions.

For information, typical operating conditions are given in [Annex B](#).

8.3 Extraction

Carry out the extraction according to ISO 1407. The rubber residue is dried until constant mass is achieved.

NOTE This preliminary extraction is not mandatory but allows the elimination of compound constituents which could interfere with the pyrolysis product.

8.4 Test portion

Take a test portion of mass appropriate to the apparatus used, usually about 0,1 mg.

8.5 Pyrolysis

Place the test portion in the pyrolysis device and purge for the necessary time.

Pyrolyse at a temperature between 400 °C and 800 °C; usually the pyrolysis temperature is about 600 °C.

Record the experimental data.

9 Interpretation of results

9.1 General

The identification of rubbers is achieved by noting the presence of certain characteristic decomposition products and by consulting the mass spectra database.

Two examples of chromatograms are presented in [Annex C](#).

The following clauses summarize all the characteristic products by family of polymer. For the interpretation of the results, refer to [Annex D](#) according to the type of column used.