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**Building and civil engineering  
sealants — Determination of surface  
cure time**

*Mastics pour le bâtiment et le génie civil — Détermination du temps  
de polymérisation en surface*

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# Contents

	Page
Foreword.....	iv
<b>1 Scope.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Normative references.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Terms and definitions.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Principle.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>5 Apparatus and materials.....</b>	<b>1</b>
5.1 Template.....	1
5.2 Base plate.....	1
5.3 Polyethylene film.....	1
5.4 Weight.....	2
5.5 Timer.....	2
<b>6 Conditioning.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>7 Preparation of test specimen.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>8 Test procedure.....</b>	<b>2</b>
8.1 General.....	2
8.2 Screening test (optional).....	2
8.3 Evaluation test.....	3
<b>9 Calculation and expression of test result.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>10 Test report.....</b>	<b>3</b>

ISO 4784:2022

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/5c1810ce-7152-4b88-babb-ccea3c01d657/iso-4784-2022>

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 59, *Buildings and civil engineering works*, Subcommittee SC 8, *Sealants*.

ISO 4784:2022

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](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

# Building and civil engineering sealants — Determination of surface cure time

## 1 Scope

The document specifies a method for the determination of the surface cure of one- and multi-component sealants.

## 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 6927, *Building and civil engineering sealants — Vocabulary*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 6927 apply.

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

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

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## 4 Principle

The surface cure time of a freshly applied sealant is determined by lightly touching the surface of the curing sealant with a polyethylene film at certain time intervals until the sealant no longer attaches itself to the film and the film appears clean when peeled from the sealant's surface.

## 5 Apparatus and materials

### 5.1 Template

Rectangular metal, high-density polyethylene (HDPE), polypropylene (PP) frame with internal dimensions of (150 ± 5) mm (length), (38 ± 2) mm (width), (6,0 ± 0,5) mm (depth).

### 5.2 Base plate

Rectangular metal or high-density polyethylene (HDPE) or polypropylene (PP) base plate with dimensions of (150 ± 5) mm (length), (75 ± 5) mm (width), and (2,0 ± 0,5) mm (thickness).

### 5.3 Polyethylene film

Strip of clear low-density polyethylene (LDPE) film with dimensions of (150 ± 5) mm (length), (20 ± 2) mm (width), and (100 ± 10) µm (thickness).

## 5.4 Weight

Metal plate with dimensions of  $(40 \pm 1)$  mm (length) and  $(30 \pm 1)$  mm (width), and weighing  $(30,0 \pm 0,5)$  g.

## 5.5 Timer

Stop watch or other suitable timer with a reading precision of at least 1 s.

## 6 Conditioning

Store supplies of the sealant in the original closed container(s) for a minimum of 16 h at  $(23 \pm 2)$  °C and  $(50 \pm 10)$  % relative humidity.

## 7 Preparation of test specimen

Prepare the test specimen(s) at standard conditions at  $(23 \pm 2)$  °C and  $(50 \pm 10)$  % relative humidity.

For multi-component sealants, thoroughly mix appropriate quantities of base component with curing agent following the manufacturer's instruction. One-component sealants can be applied directly from the original package.

Pour or fill the sealant into the template (5.1) mounted onto the base plate (5.2) and tool the surface flat using a straight metal spatula to achieve a uniform thickness. Record the time when the sealant specimen is scraped level with the spatula.

Considerations should be given to the total number of specimens that need to be prepared depending on how much information on the surface cure behaviour is already known to the experimenter.

## 8 Test procedure

ISO 4784:2022

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4784-2022

### 8.1 General

Testing shall occur at standard conditions at  $(23 \pm 2)$  °C and  $(50 \pm 10)$  % relative humidity.

### 8.2 Screening test (optional)

If the surface cure time is unknown, pre-test the test specimen by lightly touching the surface of the sealant with a strip of polyethylene wrapped over the end of a finger.

Each test shall be carried out at a different location on the sealant's surface. After the surface of the sealant is lightly touched with the polyethylene wrapped finger, the finger is immediately withdrawn from the surface and examined to see if sealant is transferred to the polyethylene film. Pre-testing is completed when no sealant is picked up on the polyethylene strip.

The following time intervals shall be used for the pre-testing: each minute for the first 10 min, each 2 min for the next 10 min, each 10 min for the next 160 min, each hour for the next 21 h, each day until a positive result is achieved or until 21 d has elapsed.

If the surface cure time occurred at an occasion during nights or weekends, start the test over, at such a time where the anticipated final point will occur during working hours.

After an estimate of the surface cure time has been determined, the pre-test shall be repeated, starting closer to the estimated surface cure time and choosing a shorter interval for testing. Intervals shall be systematically shortened (day -> hour -> 10 min -> 2 min), until the surface cure time has been determined within the shortest time interval.

### 8.3 Evaluation test

If an estimate of the surface cure time is known or has been determined by completion of the pre-test, start the actual evaluation test on newly prepared specimen(s) 10 min before the estimated surface cure time and repeated the following test procedure with a time interval of 1 min. In case a surface cure time of less than 10 min has been determined, repeat the following test procedure with a time interval of 1 min from the start of the test.

Place the polyethylene film (5.3) on a previously undisturbed section of the sealant surface and immediately cover it with the weight (5.4).

Remove the weight after  $(30 \pm 3)$  s, then peel off the polyethylene film uniformly and constantly at a right angle to the surface of the sealant.

Examine the polyethylene film for signs of sealant material. Record the time when no material is being transferred to the polyethylene film.

With some sealants, interpretation of the end point is confusing in that a very thin film of sealant or plasticizer is transferred to the film. For consistency of data, record the point where the bulk sealant is no longer transferred to the polyethylene film but ignore a very thin uniform film of sealant or the plasticizer transferred to the polyethylene strip.

Record whether the polyethylene film is clean or the film retains a thin layer of sealant or plasticizer.

## 9 Calculation and expression of test result

Calculate the surface cure time from the moment the sealant specimen is scraped level with a spatula until the moment no sealant material is transferred to the polyethylene film. The time should be reported to the nearest minute as indicated by the time between two consecutive tests.

## 10 Test report

The test report shall contain the following information:

- a) test laboratory's name and date of test;
- b) reference to this document, i.e. ISO 4784;
- c) name, type (chemical family) and colour of the sealant;
- d) batch of sealant from which the test specimens are produced;
- e) surface cure time of the sealant;
- f) mix ratio of multi-part products, if applicable;
- g) further observations (e.g. retention of thin layer of sealant or plasticizer);
- h) any deviations from this document.