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**Metallic and other inorganic coatings —  
Vickers and Knoop microhardness tests**

*Revêtements métalliques et autres revêtements inorganiques — Essais de  
microdureté Vickers et Knoop*



Reference number  
ISO 4516:2002(E)

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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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. 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.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this International Standard may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 4516 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 107, *Metallic and other inorganic coatings*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Test methods*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 4516:1980), which has been technically revised.

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# Metallic and other inorganic coatings — Vickers and Knoop microhardness tests

## 1 Scope

This International Standard describes the application of the Vickers and Knoop micro-indentation tests for determining the microhardness of metallic and other inorganic coatings. This method is applicable where indenter forces generally need to be below 10 N such as for electrodeposited coatings, autocatalytic coatings, sprayed coatings and anodic coatings on aluminium. It is applicable to measurements normal to the coated surface as described in 7.4 and to measurements on cross-sections as described in 7.3.

NOTE 1 Attention is drawn to ISO 4545, ISO 6507-1, ISO 6507-2 and ISO 6507-3, which describe Knoop and Vickers hardness testing of metallic materials. Other International Standards for instrumental indentation testing, the verification of microindentation testing instruments and for the verification of reference blocks to be used with such instruments are currently being developed (e.g. ISO 14577 Parts 1 to 4).

NOTE 2 Usually for hardness measurements of coating test forces in the microhardness range in accordance with ISO 6507-1 are used. However, since the largest possible test force should be selected, test forces of the low force and hardness ranges may also be used.

## 2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 1463, *Metallic and oxide coatings — Measurement of coating thickness — Microscopical method*

ISO 6507-1, *Metallic materials — Vickers hardness test — Part 1: Test method*

ISO 9002, *Quality systems — Model for quality assurance in production, installation and servicing*

## 3 Principle

A testing instrument slowly lowers an indenter vertically on to the test surface and holds it there for a specified time under a specified load (see 6.2). The tolerance of the applied test force is within 1 % of that specified.

An indenter is forced into the coating and the diagonal(s) of the indentation left in the surface after removal of the indenter is measured using a microscope. The indenter is applied such that the resultant indentation does not contain artefacts of the loading apparatus or procedure but rather is characteristic of the coating.

A number, known as the Vickers or Knoop hardness number, is derived from this measurement using the symbols and designations given in clause 4.