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Second edition
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Writing and marking instruments — Specification for caps to reduce the risk of asphyxiation

*Instruments pour l'écriture et le marquage — Spécifications pour les
capuchons afin de réduire le risque d'asphyxie*



Reference number
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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.

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 10, *Technical product documentation*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 11540:1993), which has been technically revised.

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Introduction

If a child inhales a pen cap it might become lodged below the larynx and block the trachea. The risk of asphyxiation can be reduced if the pen cap is ventilated or too large to enter the airway. Children have to be actively discouraged from sucking, chewing, or putting pen caps in their mouths. A way of avoiding the risk of inhalation of caps of writing and marking instruments is to manufacture products without caps whenever possible. However, if caps are essential, the provisions of ISO 11540 minimize risk by specifying the design and performance of ventilated caps which reduce the likelihood of inhalation and delays asphyxiation pending medical intervention.

ISO/TC 10 recognizes that while it is possible to identify the age range of the children who are most at risk, it is not possible to identify with certainty any writing instruments with detachable caps that would never be accessible to children and hence never pose a risk. It is, however, acknowledged that certain products (i.e. writing and marking instruments which are designed or only intended for use by adults, e.g. jewellery pens, expensive fountain pens, professional technical pens) are not intended for use by children and such items have to be clearly labelled to that effect.