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Third edition  
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## Photography — Determination of flash guide numbers for electronic flash equipment

*Photographie — Détermination des nombres guides des appareils à  
éclairs*



Reference number  
ISO 1230:2007(E)

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## Foreword

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International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

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 document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 1230 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 42, *Photography*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 1230:1992), which has been technically revised.

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## Introduction

In general flash photography, where the flash light source is mounted on a camera, the product of the camera lens  $f$ -number and the distance from the flash light source to the subject is a constant with respect to the ISO speed of the film or the digital still camera to be used. The illuminance of the subject varies with the distance according to the inverse-square law and, in order to obtain the same suitable exposure on film or image sensor, the  $f$ -number is adjusted with respect to the square root of the illuminance of the subject.

The constant is named "flash guide number" and is a very useful guide for flash photographers, because the guide number represents, in a sense, the power of illumination of the light source, for both flash lamps with and without integral reflectors and electronic flash equipment. The camera lens  $f$ -number setting can easily be calculated by dividing the guide number by the distance from the flash light source to the subject.