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# Ergonomic requirements for office work with visual display terminals (VDTs) —

## Part 13:
## User guidance

*Exigences ergonomiques pour travail de bureau avec terminaux à écrans de visualisation (TEV) —*

*Partie 13: Guidage de l'utilisateur*

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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.

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.

International Standard ISO 9241-13 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 159, *Ergonomics*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Ergonomics of human-system interaction*.

ISO 9241 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Ergonomic requirements for office work with visual display terminals (VDTs)*:

— *Part 1: General introduction*

— *Part 2: Guidance on task requirements*

— *Part 3: Visual display requirements*

— *Part 4: Keyboard requirements*

— *Part 5: Workstation layout and postural requirements*

— *Part 6: Guidance on the work environment*

— *Part 7: Requirements for display with reflections*

— *Part 8: Requirements for displayed colours*

— *Part 9: Requirements for nonkeyboard input devices*

— *Part 10: Dialogue principles*

— *Part 11: Guidance on usability*

— *Part 12: Presentation of information*

— *Part 13: User guidance*

— *Part 14: Menu dialogues*

— *Part 15: Command dialogues*

— *Part 16: Direct manipulation dialogues*

— *Part 17: Form filling dialogues*

Annexes A and B of this part of ISO 9241 are information only.

# Introduction

This part of ISO 9241 deals with user guidance aspects of software user interfaces.

The main purpose of user guidance is to aid the user's interaction with the system by

— promoting efficient system use;

— avoiding unnecessary mental workload;

— providing support to users to manage error situations; and

— providing support for users of different skill levels.

This part of ISO 9241 serves the following types of users:

— the designer of the user guidance, who will apply this part of ISO 9241 during the development process;

— designers of user guidance development tools to be used by dialogue designers;

— the buyer, who will reference this part of ISO 9241 during the product procurement process, and whose end-users will gain from the potential benefits provided by this part; and

— those responsible for ensuring that products meet the recommendations in this part of ISO 9241.

The ultimate beneficiary of this part of ISO 9241 will be the end-user at the visual display terminal (VDT). It was the needs of this user that provided the ergonomic recommendations in this part of ISO 9241. Although it is unlikely that the end-user will read this part or even know of its existence, its application should provide user interfaces that are more usable, consistent and that enable greater productivity.

Application of this part of ISO 9241 involves an understanding of the intended user, the user environment and tasks. User tasks should be listed and key tasks, defined as the most frequent and important tasks, should be explicitly identified.

Recommendations on how to use this part of ISO 9241 can be found in Informative Annex A.

For practical reasons, the following structure has been chosen for presenting the user guidance recommendations:
– common guidance recommendations (see clause 5),
– prompts (see clause 6),
– feedback (see clause 7),
– status information (see clause 8),
– error management (see clause 9),
– on-line help (see clause 10).