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**Information and documentation —  
Paper for documents —  
Requirements for permanence**

*Information et documentation — Papier pour documents —  
Exigences relatives à la permanence*

**ISO 9706**

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**Second edition  
2025-05**

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CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8  
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva  
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11  
Email: [copyright@iso.org](mailto:copyright@iso.org)  
Website: [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 10, *Requirements for document storage and conditions for preservation*, in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committee CEN/TC 172, *Pulp, paper and board*, in accordance with the Agreement on technical cooperation between ISO and CEN (Vienna Agreement).

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 9706:1994), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- the Introduction has been modified and [Annex D](#) has been added to emphasize the relationship and differences between existing standards regarding the requirements of paper for different applications: permanent and durable paper for documents which are intended to be used frequently and kept permanently, and for stable paper used for general graphic applications;
- the normative references have been updated;
- the term "document" has been replaced by an existing definition in the terminology database of ISO.

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).

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Librarians and archivists have found that paper documents made as recently as the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century show serious deterioration under typical library and archive storage conditions. Contrary to this observation, the past 1 500 years of paper use show that papers consisting mostly of cellulose have considerable permanence and durability.

Research indicates that the deterioration is due to the presence of cellulose-degrading compounds in the paper furnish and materials incorporated in the paper during manufacture, e.g. acidic materials such as rosin-alum size.

The intention of this document is to define a permanent paper that is most suitable for indefinite storage, e.g. in archives, libraries, and museums. Such paper is to be used for books as well as for files, documents and other records that are to be stored permanently for legal, cultural policy or other reasons. For this purpose, this document provides a method for specifying paper which, according to the present state of knowledge, has a high degree of permanence. Paper fulfilling the requirement of this document shows no or only slight changes in optical and mechanical properties which have an influence on readability of recording (printing, writing or copying) and handling when stored for a long period in a protected environment. This purpose requires papers eligible for permanent use to be free of oxidizable matter that causes undesirable discolouration, e.g. lignin or recycled material of uncertain composition, and/or substances that have a negative impact on mechanical strength, for example any type of acid sizing or other acid-producing substances.

This document is based on a small number of quantitative tests for which limiting values have been specified. Paper classified in accordance with this document shall show measurement results within the specified limits for all prescribed tests.

The limits are chosen so that paper conforming to the specifications of this document can be produced in large quantities at reasonable prices. This permits printing firms, publishing companies, public administration, and others to use this paper for all types of written and printed matter, files and records, or publications which for any reason are to be preserved indefinitely in libraries, archives or any other entities concerned in this matter.

There are two standards, apart from this document, regarding different applications of paper:

- ISO 11108, which describes archival paper with the same permanence requirements as for this document and with high durability (able to withstand the effects of wear and tear during use).
- ISO 20494, which describes paper for general graphic applications, not intended for permanent storage, including newspapers, magazines, catalogues, books, office printouts and copies, where changes in optical properties over time can be tolerated.

This document and ISO 11108 differ from ISO 20494; they are not comparable either in approach or in method. In ISO 20494, the decrease in mechanical-physical strength that a paper suffers when subjected to moist heat treatment for up to 12 days is the basis for defining service life despite any optical changes.

Conversely, this document and ISO 11108 are based on the fact that acid-catalysed hydrolysis is the major cause of the degradation of cellulose, the substance that provides strength to paper, and that this acid hydrolysis is strongly inhibited if an alkaline buffer and no or little acid-forming substances are present in the paper. Furthermore, this document and ISO 11108 define a resistance to oxidation, which requires the paper to have a Kappa number of less than 5, corresponding to about 10 g of lignin per kg of paper. This document and ISO 11108 therefore specify a paper that is expected to remain substantially unchanged over time, whereas ISO 20494 accepts the loss of brightness or yellowing. Further description of the relationship between these standards can be found in [Annex D](#).

Both this document and ISO 11108 evaluate the permanence properties of the paper. Note, however, that a document is considered permanent if it includes both a permanent paper substrate and a permanent recording method (i.e. writing, printing and copying). Permanence and durability of recording materials are tested according to ISO 11798. Cultural policy and, if applicable, legal mandates require archives, libraries, museums, and other collections to store written material and printed matter of this kind in perpetuity, to

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industry, and any place where other written materials are created that are eligible for permanent storage, should ensure that the requirements of this document (mechanical strength, alkali reserve, oxidation resistance and pH value, measured in each case on the paper as produced) are met.

A reasoned explanation for the exclusion of some common paper testing methods is given in [Annex C](#).

This document may be used as a stand-alone specification. It may also be incorporated as a component in other specifications used in trade or as national or international standards for more specific purposes.