



International Organization for
Standardization

ISO, n.d.[a]

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About ISO

ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 161 national standards bodies.

Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges.

You'll find our Central Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland. Learn more about our structure and how we are governed.

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↓ Visiting ISO [PDF, 387.96 KB]

What are standards?

International Standards **make things work**. They give world-class specifications for products, services and systems, to ensure quality, safety and efficiency. They are instrumental in facilitating **international trade**.

ISO has published 22242 International Standards and related documents, covering almost every industry, from technology, to food safety, to agriculture and healthcare. ISO International Standards impact everyone, everywhere.

Learn more about standards and what they can do for you

Want to know more about ISO and standards?

Follow us on:



ISO in figures



What ISO Standards can do for you

Our key achievements
*in figures at a single
glance*

Looking to get certified?

ISO doesn't provide certification or conformity assessment. You'll need to contact an external certification body for that. Read more about certification and how to find a certification body.

Our Story

The ISO story began in 1946 when delegates from 25 countries met at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London and decided to create a new international organization 'to facilitate the international coordination and unification of industrial standards'. On 23 February 1947 the new organization, ISO, officially began operations.

Since then, we have published over 22242 International Standards covering almost all aspects of technology and manufacturing.

Today we have members from 161 countries and 783 technical committees and subcommittees to take care of standards development. More than 135 people work full time for ISO's Central Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland.

To find out more about the history of ISO, see our timeline.

It's all in the name



Founders of ISO, London 1946

Read more about the history of ISO in the book **Friendship Among Equals** [PDF] published to mark ISO's 50th anniversary.



Annual reports

A summary of the year's activities

Because 'International Organization for Standardization' would have different acronyms in different languages (IOS in English, OIN in French for *Organisation internationale de normalisation*), our founders decided to give it the short form ISO. ISO is derived from the Greek isos, meaning equal. Whatever the country, whatever the language, we are always ISO.

What are the benefits of ISO International Standards?

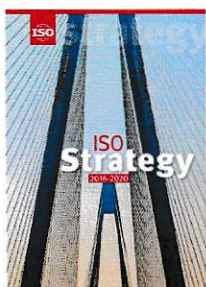
ISO International Standards ensure that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. For business, they are strategic tools that reduce costs by minimizing waste and errors and increasing productivity. They help companies to access new markets, level the playing field for developing countries and facilitate free and fair global trade.

How does ISO develop standards?

Our standards are developed by the people that need them, through a consensus process. Experts from all over the world develop the standards that are required by their sector. This means they reflect a wealth of international experience and knowledge.

ISO Standards in Action

Learn about how International Standards work in the real world, address shared challenges and the things that matter most for people, the environment and business. The question is, what matters to you?



ISO Strategy 2016-2020
The ISO Strategy outlines our priorities for the next five years. It provides guidance and



Annual Report 2017
Building for better future 2017 saw renewed emphasis on our strong network of ISO members, supported by a wide



ISO in brief
An introduction to the ISO standardization system, the system's output, ISO partners and ISO's path forward.

strategic direction, helping us to respond to a future where constant change will require us to continually improve the ISO system.

variety of stakeholders that helps to make ISO standards more globally known. We also invest in the standards capabilities, the know-how and the talent to continue creating value for the...

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