



AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARD

**Quantities and Procedures for Description and  
Measurement of Environmental Sound – Part 1:  
Basic Quantities and Definitions**

**Secretariat:**

**Acoustical Society of America**

**Approved on February 27, 2013:**

**American National Standards Institute, Inc.**

**Abstract**

This standard provides basic quantities for description of sound in community environments and general procedures for measurement of these quantities. Based on these quantities and procedures, compliance limits of sound may be specified by cognizant authorities and conformance with the limits controlled for purposes of environmental assessment, regulation, and land use planning.

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ANSI/ASA S12.9-2013/Part 1

Accredited Standards Committee S12, Noise

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Standards Secretariat  
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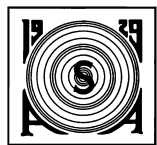
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## Contents

1	Scope .....	1
2	Normative references .....	1
3	Definitions, nomenclature, and mathematical descriptions .....	2
3.0	Preface .....	2
3.1	Definitions .....	2
3.2	Nomenclature .....	7
3.3	Mathematical descriptions .....	9
4	Instruments and calibration .....	10
4.1	General .....	10
4.2	Calibration .....	11
5	Measurements .....	12
5.1	General .....	12
5.2	Measurement positions .....	12
5.3	Meteorological conditions .....	13
5.4	Measurement of time-average sound level or sound exposure level .....	13
5.5	Adjustments .....	14
6	Information to be recorded .....	14
6.1	General information .....	14
6.2	Specific temporal, terrain, and atmospheric conditions prevailing during the measurements .....	14
Annex A (informative)	Some quantities used for various noise assessment purposes .....	15
A.1	Continuous sound .....	15
A.2	Single event sounds .....	15
A.3	Long-term environments .....	15
A.4	Special sound measurement situations .....	15

## Tables

Table 1 — Quantity symbols and unit symbols. ....	8
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## Foreword

[This Foreword is for information only, and is not a part of ANSI/ASA S12.9-2013/Part 1 American National Standard Quantities and Procedures for Description and Measurement of Environmental Sound - Part 1: Basic Quantities and Definitions. As such, this Foreword may contain material that has not been subjected to public review or a consensus process. In addition, it does not contain requirements necessary for conformance to the standard.]

This standard comprises a part of a group of definitions, standards, and specifications for use in noise. It was developed and approved by Accredited Standards Committee S12, Noise, under its approved operating procedures. Those procedures have been accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The Scope of Accredited Standards Committee S12 is as follows:

*Standards, specifications, and terminology in the field of acoustical noise pertaining to methods of measurement, evaluation, and control, including biological safety, tolerance, and comfort, and physical acoustics as related to environmental and occupational noise.*

This standard is a revision of ANSI S12.9-1988/Part 1, which has been technically revised.

This standard is the American National counterpart to International Standard ISO 1996-1:2003, with appropriate modifications to conform to American procedures and practice. This standard provides basic quantities and general procedures for the description and measurement of environmental sound in a community.

At the time this Standard was submitted to Accredited Standards Committee S12, Noise, for approval, the membership was as follows:

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Suggestions for improvements of this standard will be welcomed. They should be sent to Accredited Standards Committee S12, Noise, in care of the Standards Secretariat of the Acoustical Society of America, 35 Pinelawn Road, Suite 114E, Melville, New York 11747-3177. Telephone: 631-390-0215; FAX: 631-390-0217; E-mail: [asastds@aip.org](mailto:asastds@aip.org).

## Introduction

This standard describes basic quantities and general procedures for assessment of sound with respect to community response. Research on the ways in which people and communities are affected by common everyday noises in the environment has led to a variety of measures for assessment of different types of noise. The variety of measures has introduced some confusion about the relationship among the measures and their applicability for specific purposes. This standard defines consistent measures for physical quantities that may be used to measure and assess environmental sound.

Time-average A-weighted sound level is adopted in this standard as a basic quantity for all community sound except high-energy impulsive sound. A C-weighted sound exposure level is used to describe high-energy impulsive sounds such as blasts or sonic boom, and it may be used to describe other low-frequency sound sources such as industrial processes, transportation sources and electric power generating facilities. The Annex provides information concerning some of the basic quantities that have been used to describe certain environmental sounds.



## American National Standard

# Quantities and Procedures for Description and Measurement of Environmental Sound - Part 1: Basic Quantities and Definitions

## 1 Scope

The purpose of this standard is to provide basic quantities and procedures for the description and measurement of sound in community environments. The information in this document supplements the basic information contained in the Standards listed as references.

This standard defines the basic quantities that can be used separately or in combination for the description of community sound and describes basic procedures for measurement of the quantities. The scope of this standard encompasses all types of environmental sounds, separately or in combination, that contribute to the total sound at a site.

This standard does not specify limits for environmental sounds or recommend measurement locations or durations.

This standard is applicable to the description and measurement of community sound for purposes of land use planning, environmental assessment, and noise control. Based on the principles described in this standard, compliance limits of sound may be specified by cognizant authorities and conformance with these limits controlled for purposes of environmental assessment and regulation and land use planning.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this standard. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ANSI S1.4-1983 (R 2006) *American National Standard Specification for Sound Level Meters*

ANSI S1.4A-1985 (R 2006) *Amendment to American National Standard Specification for Sound Level Meters*

ANSI/ASA S1.13-2005 (R 2010) *American National Standard Measurement of Sound Pressure Levels in Air*

ANSI S12.7-1986 (R 2006) *American National Standard Method for Measurement of Impulse Noise*

ANSI/ASA S12.9-2005/Part 4 *American National Standard Quantities and Procedures for Description and Measurement of Environmental Sound, Part 4: Noise Assessment and Prediction of Long-term Community Response*

ANSI/ASA S1.40-2006 (R 2011) *American National Standard Specifications and Verification Procedures for Sound Calibrators*