

COLOUR CODING GAS CYLINDERS

The European Standard EN 1089-3 (2011) specifies a colour coding system for identification of the contents of gas cylinders for industrial gases, breathing gas application and gases for medical use. This colour coding does not apply to LPG, to refrigerant gases, to fire extinguishers or to cylinders grouped in a bundle. In some countries, and on maritime vessels, deviations from EN-1089-3 can be observed. The official labelling remains the primary method of indicating hazards.

The colour coding allows to identify gases and hazards from a distance (e.g. in case of fire)

THE GAS PROPERTIES DETERMINE THE COLOUR CODING :

- TOXIC AND/OR CORROSIVE
- FLAMMABLE
- OXIDIZING
- INERT

A second colour can be applied for a secondary hazard. Some specific gases carry dedicated colour codes.

The colour coding applies to the shoulder of the cylinder. The colour of the cylinder body can vary, but (only) medical gases have white cylinder bodies.

If in doubt, please contact your gas supplier.

HAZARDS					
					
Toxic and/or corrosive	Flammable	Oxidizing	Inert		

SPECIFIC GASES					
					
C_2H_2	N_2	He	CO_2	O_2	Ar
Acetylene	Nitrogen	Helium	Carbon dioxide	Oxygen	Argon
					
N_2O	HCl	NH_3	H_2	C_2H_4O	Ar + CO_2
Nitrous oxide	Hydrogen chloride	Ammonia	Hydrogen	Ethylene oxide	Argon + Carbon Dioxide

GASES FOR MEDICAL USE					
					
O_2	N_2		$N_2O + O_2$	N_2O	CO_2
Oxygen	Nitrogen	Air	Nitrous oxide + oxygen	Nitrous oxide	Carbon dioxide